

OUR ANTIPODES:

OR,

RESIDENCE AND RAMBLES

IN

THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES.

WITH

A GLIMPSE OF THE GOLD FIELDS.

BY L^T. COLONEL

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TO HIS MOTHER

THIS RECORD OF A PILGRIMAGE JUST ACCOMPLISHED

IS DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR

WITH THE DEEPEST SENTIMENTS OF

FILIAL REVERENCE AND LOVE.

PREFACE.

"Australia is the greatest accession to substantial power ever made by England. It is the gift of a continent, unstained by war, usurpation, or the sufferings of a people."—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

"The land of The South that lies under our feet,
Deficient in mouths, overburthen'd with meat!"—*Punch.*

To publish a Book without a Preface, is like thrusting one's acquaintance, without the ceremony of introduction, upon some distinguished and formidable stranger. A few observations may be necessary, therefore, in submitting these Volumes to the Public.

Their contents, then, are taken from diaries extending over a period of more than five years,—five years of "Residence" in the city of Sydney, with various "Rambles," on duty or during leisure, into the interior of New South Wales, as well as to the adjacent Colonies of New Zealand, Van Diemen's Land, and Victoria;—the latest of these excursions having for its object the newly-discovered Gold Field of the Bathurst district.

The visit to New Zealand, its military posts and battle-fields, having been accomplished "on particular service," a slight outline of the late Anglo-Maori war has, almost insensibly, linked itself with the personal narrative.

The Author would have the Public bear in mind that, during the whole of his sojourn in Australia, he was their paid and of course hard-working servant. They will be pleased to contemplate him as part and parcel of his office-desk, plodding through returns and reports, records and regulations, warrants and articles of war; exchanging an occasional dry word with his clerks perched on their long-legged stools, and enjoying only fugitive glimpses, over the rim of his spectacles, of more external and unprofessional affairs.

But although the reduction of his notes to what he would fain believe a readable form, constituted the recreation of his leisure hours, not the business of his days, he would beg to advance that no trouble nor care was on his part spared that he had time to devote to this object.*

* The Author takes this occasion to acknowledge and express his thanks to Mr. W. L. Walton, for the care, skill, and fidelity with which he has adapted and transferred to the stone the sketches placed in his hands.

OUR ANTIPODES;

OR,

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IN

THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES.

CHAPTER I.

VOYAGE OUT.

A MAN must be leading in Europe a very sad, solitary, or unsatisfactory existence, who can, without many a pang of regret, many a sigh of painful separation, gird up his loins, shoulder his wallet, and clutch his staff, for a pilgrimage to Australia.

Whether the sentence to be transported beyond the seas emanate in due course of law from a big-wig on the Bench, or in due course of service from a big-wig in the Colonial Office, the Horse Guards, or the Admiralty, he must be a hardened offender or an easy-souled optimist who can hear it without emotion.

There are indeed two cases in which the shock may fall with mitigated rigour—the one where the individual, having both merited and expected the gallows, finds

himself expelled his country for his country's good, instead of passing through the hands of the hangman; the other, when a step of promotion and an honourable appointment accompany the fiat of expulsion.

Give me credit, kind Reader, for belonging to the latter class of exiles.*

Life is but a span; and of that brief term few are the days that by a great majority of men, especially by Englishmen, and emphatically by younger sons and brothers, are destined to be spent in the home of their infancy, or even in the land of their birth. But however engrossing may be their pursuits in foreign climes—however vivid the excitement, cruel the misfortunes, or stirring the events wherein this portion of their life is passed—the memory of home will be intimately interwoven with all. Like a sunny streamlet flowing side by side with the traveller's path, it will cheer his eye and sing in his ear as he plods along his weary way. In health or sick-

* The Author had been appointed Deputy Adjutant-General in the Australian Colonies.

The following anecdote was related at a regimental mess in Sydney by a gentleman holding a high official appointment in the Colony under the Crown

Returning home on leave of absence about the year 1847, he got into conversation with an Irish cabman, who, recollecting his person, demanded respectfully "where his honour had been this long time."

"In New South Wales," was the reply.

"Botany Bay, is it?" pursued the driver.

"Exactly," said the gentleman.

After a short pause, Paddy's curiosity overcoming his politeness, he whispered, "Might I make bould to ask, Sir, what took you there?"

"Oh! I went at the Queen's expense," answered the other, humouring his interrogator's evident suspicions.

Here Paddy's politeness recovered itself, although his suspicions were confirmed. "Ah!" said he, "there's many a good man gone out that same way."

ness, wealth or ruin, joy or grief, victory or defeat, it is from home he looks for sympathy; it is *at* home that he hopes, sooner or later, to display his laurels and enjoy his gains, or, should fortune have frowned upon his lot, to lay down his burthen of sorrows and reverses.

The schoolboy blubbers openly, or manfully swallows his bitter feelings, as the chaise or train bears him off, for a few weeks only, from home and holidays to Latin and Greek. The fair and happy bride, while the four greys are pawing before the home no longer hers, throws herself—all tears—into her mother's arms, though well aware that almost ere the honeymoon has waned she will embrace her once more. In such cases parting is but sweet sorrow. There is little saccharine, believe me, in the affair, when The Antipodes is the point of destination!

The immense distance and the amount of time necessary to accomplish it, the tardiness of correspondence with home, the gradual alienation too surely springing from protracted absence, and the foreknowledge that this absence can only terminate by the repetition of the same tremendous voyage,—such are some of the drawbacks confronting him who meditates expatriation.

And the mental as well as corporeal miseries of these voyages—who shall paint them? The greater part of a precious year passed in a state of marine vegetation—the existence of a zoophyte! Imprisonment for an indefinite number of "lunar months," with or without hard labour, according to the humour of the elements! for where is a wretch more literally "cabined, cribbed, confined," than on board a ship; and how can hard

labour be more effectually carried out than when the prison itself labours?

Fortunately the spirit of man is immeasurably buoyant and elastic; it will not long suffer depression. He must be a faint-hearted pilgrim indeed who fails to stow away hope in his wallet. There is no viaticum like it—for he may live upon it for ever!

On the afternoon of the 3d March, 1846, I arrived at Gravesend with a brother who had volunteered to see me on board, and took rooms for the night at the Falcon Hotel, from the windows of which we witnessed a somewhat ill-omened incident as a precursor of the voyage.

Scarcely had we got the *Agincourt* within the focus of the hotel telescope, as she lay at anchor in the stream, when a hulking collier, lumbering along with the ebb tide, fell right aboard of the barque, snapping off her jib-boom like a carrot, and inflicting other more trifling damage.

To find, to fashion, and to rig so considerable a spar, caused a delay of twenty-four hours. These we passed ashore, for a glance at the state of chaos presented by the decks, cuddy, and cabins of the vessel, aggravated as it was by the aforesaid accident, and at the groups of helpless and hapless passengers and puzzled servants standing aghast amongst the baggage, was sufficient to prevent any impetuous desire on my part to take possession of my temporary home. Indeed to have done so would have been an effort no less heroic and not very unlike the storming of a barricade—so impregnable was its present position, not only from the piles of my

own effects, but from the outworks raised by my neighbours.

We felt that to escalade a wagon load of furniture, or to turn the flank of a breastwork of casks, containing hams and Allsop's ale,—was feasible enough; but to carry by assault a line of sofas, bandboxes, and pianos, manned by half-a-dozen Abigails, was a feat too desperate to be lightly undertaken.

Relanding our forces, therefore, we passed the night and the following day at Gravesend, seeing as much of the lions of the good but not very interesting town as nearly perpetual rain would permit.

Nothing very worthy of note occurred there, except perhaps that, having ordered a late dinner for my brother and self at the inn, and strolling into the coffee-room in quest of distraction from feelings full of gloom, I found one of the tables occupied by a solitary individual, who having already dined, and possibly discussed a pint of "Warren's Jet" in the shape of inn port, seemed absorbed in the contents of a memorandum-book.

Instinct prompting me, I addressed this gentleman with the words—"Sir, may I take the liberty of inquiring whether you are one of my fellow-passengers in the *Agincourt*, for Sydney?" He slowly raised his head, and with an expression of countenance as disconsolate as that of Liston in the "Illustrious Stranger," when the procession, conducting him to a living tomb, crosses the stage, replied gravely—"I think, Sir, you might judge from the length of my visage that I am one of those unfortunate persons."

Such was the commencement of an acquaintance—of a friendship I may say—which beguiled for me many an otherwise dull and tedious hour during the passage. Mr. F—— will recognise and forgive this little sketch, while he accepts the acknowledgments due to him as an intelligent and intellectual companion.

In this capacity, as well as in that of the humorous and eccentric editor of our weekly newspaper—of which more anon—my friend of the *Falcon* deserved the gratitude of "all hands" on board the good ship *Agincourt.*

It was midnight, on the 4th March, when this gentleman and myself repaired on board for a permanence. The activity of a practised servant had reduced the hopeless looking confusion of yesterday into perfect symmetry, and my cabin now contained as much comfort as could well be compressed into nine feet square. In every corner of it some notable contrivance attested the care of a provident and affectionate hand;—it is difficult to outgrow a mother's care; years cannot place one beyond its influence, nor distance beyond its reach;—the babe in the cradle, the toil and clime-worn man, may equally benefit by its fosterage. "Vive la Maternité," therefore, be *my* cry;—from the bottom of my soul I believe "La fraternité," in the French sense at least, to be an arrant humbug—and not seldom a Cain in disguise.

It must be a soldier's wind that favours a vessel down the Thames and down the Channel too. We got none such. On the 5th we were at anchor in Margate Roads; the 6th and 7th off Deal, where my new friend and myself indulged ourselves with another hour or two of British soil, laying in an additional provision of sea stock,

together with a tolerable dinner at the Royal Hotel, and a bottle of claret, which cost us ten shillings and a pain under the waistcoat.

A splendid summer-like Sunday was the 8th of March —*Agincourt* trying her paces successfully with twenty other large vessels, all taking advantage of a fresh N.E. breeze, as we rushed together in a body past the magnificent cliffs of Dover. At nine P.M. the following day we kissed hands to the "Oar's Light;"—it was the last sight of Albion as we thought; but the wind proving unsettled, we were enabled to send letters ashore at the Start Point by a fishing-boat on the 12th, on which evening we got fairly away—a shipful of strangers bound to a strange land.

If I were writing for any but English readers, I might be tempted to extract largely from my sea-log; but the passage of the Atlantic had nothing new for me; and almost every English family has at least one member who, while happy in an interim of home, can enlighten the fire-side circle with reminiscences rendering seafaring life a household subject in the most rurally secluded nooks of our blessed islands

Nothing, indeed, could well have been less eventful than our voyage. We had an excellent vessel of 600 tons and upwards,—well found in every particular; an active, skilful, liberal, and attentive captain, who had one very remarkable peculiarity as a "skipper;" he was never heard to utter an oath, nor anything approaching the nature of one, nor indeed any expression of harshness or abuse towards his people; yet the discipline on board was admirable.

A most excellent table was kept; the roughest weather was not admitted as an excuse for meagre fare—as is often the case in passenger ships;—and let me hint that in the monotony of sea-life the vulgar pastime of eating and drinking is a point of more consequence than an animal possessing a soul likes altogether to confess.

The cook was a phœnix in his way. Rarely visible, never heard to speak; in heat or cold, "blow high, blow low," he silently and steadfastly performed his important ministry. The caboose was his house and home, cloak and clothing,—for he had seldom any other covering than its roof. It was miraculous to count the number and variety of dishes that, about three o'clock, issued from his narrow den,—soups, fish, joints, side-dishes, pies, puddings,—all neatly served up. Roll, and plunge, and dive as the vessel might, this inimitable sea-cook never failed us. No difficulty existed in the creation of the repast. It lay in getting its components along the deck to the cabin-table, keeping them there when on, and receiving them thankfully and discreetly with the proper implements and through the proper channels.

This marine Ude, when one caught a glimpse of him, looked like an old raven in an iron cage. Some ascribed to his character a touch of the supernatural. As for me, I incline to the opinion that he was merely human, although he *did* cook, and cook well, for fourteen cabin passengers, and a crew of some thirty men, under all weathers and circumstances.

Like the cook, there was another faithful servant on board, whose duties were performed with unswerving zeal—the cow, namely. She was a wretched-looking

creature, all skin and bone,—and indeed the skin was quite worn off some of the acute angles of her frame; yet, in spite of dry food and a wet berth,—for the sea constantly broke over her stall,—she yielded her daily dole of eight or ten quarts a-day throughout the passage.

March 22d.—Passing Madeira, I hailed this gem of the sea as an old acquaintance, but felt no desire for a second visit.

In a long voyage going ashore unsettles the mind and the body. Once at my oar I think only of the end of my pull, and have no wish to loiter on the way. Not that I would voluntarily pass by any spot worthy of notice; but it is well to be spared the occasion of tasting the delights of dry land for a few hours or days, and of thereby renewing the feelings of repugnance arising from the exchange of spacious rooms and the wide firm earth for the prison-like cabin, and the narrow and heaving deck.

To the *Agincourt* the great highway of nations appeared, at least on her present journey, like the most unfrequented by-way, for we touched nowhere, and spoke only one vessel during a passage of nearly sixteen weeks.

What a happy endowment is the elasticity of spirit with which most of us are gifted by nature! In whatever position chance may deposit a man for the nonce, it requires no great exertion of philosophy to discover some causes of comfort, some ingredients of amusement; and so, indeed, I found it in the present case. I left England with a heavy heart; yet in a short month my

bosom's lord sat lightly on his throne once more; my mind gleaning employment and entertainment from a hundred unthought-of sources. On board a ship every trifling event is magnified into importance, and indeed nothing is unimportant that adds to our stock of knowledge. One day a porpoise is speared from the jib-boom, and you are taught by the tars who are cutting him up that a meal of salmon and beef-steaks may be obtained from his flesh, and some two gallons of good oil from his blubber. A dolphin, a flying fish, one hauled, the other coming voluntarily on board, are submitted to your inspection. You perceive that the former is, as far as figure goes, by no means the odd fish the Ancients have portrayed him. You cease to wonder that the latter has no peace either under the water or above it—when you find, yourself, how very good he is to eat. A grand draught of albucors takes place. Crew and passengers partake largely of the delicacy; crew and passengers pronounce it no bad substitute for mackarel; and crew and passengers soon after call for the doctor—the lesson they learn being that this fish, though not always unwholesome, is when out of season extremely so.

A perfect museum of marine ornithology is opened to your study. The several subjects are hooked and hauled over the taffrail, and the indefatigable ship-surgeon, killing each of them with one drop of some "fast speeding gear," proceeds to "cure" them with another deadly poison. It is almost terrible to see the huge albatross, twelve feet across the wings, drop stone dead as the homœopathic dose touches his palate. One must harden his heart in

order to justify the "experimentum in corpore vili," for science and its pursuit cover a multitude of cruelties.

Time is so carefully cut up on board ship that it is difficult to find the day very long. The breakfast at eight or nine, the lunch at twelve, the dinner at three, and the tea at seven o'clock, are all efficient time-killers. Every one throws his small store of books into the common stock, and after a little practice one can enjoy an hour's reading very well in the "cleated" arm-chair, from whose cozy depths the owner may, without rising, open the window, the door, or the drawers, take a book from the shelf, a dip from the inkstand, or a "nip" from the liqueur case.

The old school-boy trick of blotting out each day from the calendar as it passes was performed with a mixture of pleasure and spite.

Sunday and Thursday were champagne days!—Wednesday, the day on which our newspaper, "The Weekly Weed," was published. My friend of the Falcon, heretofore honourably mentioned, was, as I have said, the editor—his cabin window the "lion's mouth," for the receipt of contributions. If such were furnished—well; if not, he himself possessed so strong a determination of ideas to the pen as to be never at a loss for a couple of sheets of entertaining matter; which moreover it was his further duty to read aloud as soon as dessert was placed on the table. A good laugh is a good thing, and we owe our worthy editor many a one.

It were a breach of copyright to publish without special permission any of his entertaining "leaders" and other articles; but I owe no apology to any one except to

the reader for introducing here a single specimen of the contributions. It appears to have been penned early in the voyage, when the writer was suffering under home-sickness, love-sickness, or sea-sickness—all three perhaps! and was considered almost too sentimental for the poet's corner of the Weekly Weed.

ON HEARING A ROBIN SING ON BOARD A SHIP BOUND TO NEW SOUTH WALES.

I.

WEE feather'd friend with russet coat,
And scarlet vest and tuneful throat—
    Right welcome here!
I never thought mid ocean's roar,
So far from England's bowery shore,
    Thy song to hear.

II.

Each note that through my cabin rings
Of bygone days some memory brings—
    Beguiled I roam
Through hawthorn-glade and holly-grove
In dreams of beauty, joy, and love,
    And happy Home.

III.

When winter bound the frosted earth,
Thou sought'st my ever friendly hearth,
    Hungry and cold.
I smiled to see thee "sidling"* come
To dry thy plumes and pick the crumb,
    Half shy, half bold.

IV.

And *now*—how true that kindly deed
Or soon or late shall find its meed—
    Now I am sad;
And thou my favours dost repay,
For with thy merry roundelay
    Thou mak'st me glad.

* Cowper.

It is painful to relate that the attempt to introduce into Australia our small friend in the red waistcoat was unsuccessful. Of a large cageful not one lived to reach Sydney.

Cock-robin belongs to the lawns and drawing-room windows of England's country houses and cottages. In benighted climes, possessing neither snow, nor ice, he would have no excuse to intrude where he alone of the feathered tribes finds his way and a welcome. No—the proud and patriotic little fellow could die—but he could not emigrate! There is certainly something sacred about the person and the character of the robin: for that child of wrath the British school-boy hesitates to make the redbreast the object of a cock-shy; and even the French sportsman spares him—unless game happens to be unusually scarce.

If a journal, like history, have a certain conventional dignity to uphold, it may be sadly violated by the admission of such trifles as the above; but if the reader has condescended to accept the writer for a companion, he must make his account to laugh with him or at him sometimes, and to trifle with him pretty often by the way.

April 10*th*.—Crossed the equator.

Neptune sent his usual message inviting himself and suite on board for this afternoon. Our captain, however, an enemy to any species of tom-foolery liable to end in drunkenness, riot, and ill-blood, snuffed out the affair at once; and the passengers, approving of his decision, collected a bonus of 5*l*. to indemnify the crew for the loss of their frolic.

There were on board certain juveniles, whose chins escaped by this negotiation a terrible scrape from the sea-god's rusty razor.

Although the strict discipline of a man-of-war may confine within moderate bounds this time-honoured opportunity for uproarious licence, it is open to serious abuse when the scene is a trading vessel, and when—as is not impossible—the master happens to be a coarse and despotic character, and his passengers are of a more refined order.

I remember a case where a military officer was roughly informed by the skipper of the vessel, in which he was a passenger on duty, that he should be shaved whether he paid the fine or not; and when the officer replied that he intended to remain in his cabin during the ceremony, but was willing to give a handsome present to the men, he was assured that he would be dragged upon deck and forced to undergo what others did who had not previously crossed the Line. "My cabin is my castle," was the answer, "and I shall shoot any man who attempts to enter against my will."

The skipper laughed at this threat; and, in short, when the time arrived, a noisy half-drunken rabble besieged his door, and, being refused admittance, proceeded to force the lock. The officer, who had no intention to trifle, had cocked his pistol and pointed it towards the door;—when, sluice! from some unseen source came a thin but solid jet of water, which drenched the priming of the fire-arm and struck it from his hand. While his whole attention had, it seems, been directed towards his front, an unsuspected foe had removed the bull's

eye in the deck above his head, and the fire-engine had done the rest!

But, seriously speaking, this horse-(marine) play is incompatible with the ordinary intercourse of different grades of men; and brute violence, even when exerted in joke, deserves to be violently repelled.

On the 4th May we sailed right through the group of Tristan Da Cunha—passing "Nightingale" and "Inaccessible" Islands on our right and left—the latter at the distance of half a mile. It is a rock-scarped table-land covered with a stunted shrub-like gorse. Several fine fresh-water cascades—one of them apparently as considerable as any in Switzerland—were seen leaping down the whole depth of the cliff, probably five hundred feet.

About six miles to our left appeared the chief island of Tristan Da Cunha, with its snow-capped mountain in the midst. It is probably the most utterly secluded spot inhabited by man. Here resides the so-called Governor of the Group, Corporal Glass, and twenty or thirty other Europeans—most of them descendants from the one or two patriarchal pairs who were originally wrecked there.

Agincourt's approach to this solitary cluster of islands gave occasion for a forcible editorial article in The Weed. In the doubt whether the corporal had been duly accredited from home, or had usurped the supreme authority, it was proposed to effect a landing upon the main island, and to impose upon the united islands a new constitution concocted during the editor's cigar and gin-and-water hours.

The only feature of the meditated scheme of government, worthy of record perhaps for the benefit of future statesmen, was the mode of election of the governor and his principal officers. Parties ambitious of public employment were to be invited to tender their terms. The best man—that is, the lowest contractor for the work required—would be chosen, and good security would be exacted for the due performance of his contract—a business-like notion, not repugnant to the dictum of Sir Robert Peel, "that the very best men that can be found should be placed in the administration of colonial affairs!"

One of our fellow-passengers, remarkable for rather desultory habits, was nominated to the pluralist post of collector of revenue, registrar of births, &c. &c., and commissioner of woods and forests for "Inaccessible Island"—there not being a stick, a stiver, or a specimen of mankind on that utterly desert rock!

Fortunately the breeze freshened to half a gale of wind, and Corporal Glass had no opportunity of repudiating the bran-new constitution, as he would certainly have done—if for no better reason than his perfectly natural preference of despotic rule to a form of government of a more responsible cast!

Thus wiled we away, as well as we could, the tedious and monotonous hours of a voyage to the Antipodes.

I say nothing of storms and calms, breezes fair or foul, light or stiff, weather bright or hazy, hot or icy, thunder, rain, or hail, tumid clouds or minacious billows. We had our share of all these. And indeed no slight variations of climate were crowded for us into

a short space; for, singular as it may appear, in nine weeks we ran fairly through the seasons. We had winter weather at Deal, overtook spring in the vicinity of Madeira, plunged into midsummer on the equator, found autumn in latitude 35°; and, soon after passing Tristan Da Cunha, winter helped us on with our pea-jackets again.

June 20*th*.—Land ho! Cape Otway twenty miles distant.

At this first indication of our destined bourne, those of the passengers who had previously visited New Holland, or who had adopted it for their country, began to show strong symptoms of excitement and impatience, and indeed they had occasion to suffer the pangs of hope deferred, for the slashing breeze that had brought us as straight as a crow's flight from the Cape of Good Hope, suddenly deserted us in Bass's Straits, leaving the good ship to drift about like a log within view of the islet of Rodondo, the Devil's Tower, and Hogan's Group.

After forty-eight hours, however, the wind again arose, and carried us forth from this dangerous though picturesque Archipelago.

For myself, the yearning to step upon the strange land likely to be my place of sojourn for some years by no means affected me to a painful degree. Although tired of the sea and ship life, and eager to plant my foot once more on *terra firma*, the "Terra Australis Incognita" of the old navigators was not precisely the choice I should have made—if I had had one; for in all that land there was not one human face, as far as I knew, that I had ever seen before.

Meanwhile the *Agincourt* rounded Cape Howe, the south-eastern point of New Holland, with a favouring breeze. On the 24th, I found myself in my solitude of the main-crosstrees,—solitude rarely disturbed by any of my brother landsmen,—sweeping with my telescope the forest hills of Twofold Bay—beyond these the huge salient promontory of the Dromedary with the pretty Montagu Island at its foot—and the long dim line of scarped and inhospitable coast stretching away to the northward of these points.

CHAPTER II.

[1846.]

BOTANY BAY—PORT JACKSON—SYDNEY COVE—THE CITY—GEORGE-STREET—PITT-STREET—THE BARRACKS—NATIVE BLACKS—ARCHITECTURE—HYDE-PARK AND HYDE-PARK BARRACKS—TEETOTAL MEETING—A DINNER PARTY—MY FIRST RESIDENCE—LAWYERS—LIGHTING, PAVING, SEWERAGE—DOGS, CATS, GOATS—PRICE CURRENT—MEAT DIET—HEALTH AND BEAUTY—CLIMATE—THEATRE—CABBAGE-TREE MOB—ORDERLY POPULATION—RIOTING—AUCTIONS—ADVERTISEMENTS—SYDNEY SHOPS—GAMES—CRICKET—OLD ENGLISH BOYISH GAMES—PRIVATE EQUIPAGES—PUBLIC CARRIAGES—GOVERNMENT DOMAIN—BOTANIC GARDENS—HORTICULTURAL EXHIBITION—SOUTH HEAD ROAD—WILD BUSH FLOWERS—RIDE TO BOTANY BAY—WATER—BRICKFIELDER—HOT WIND—SAND-STORM—EYE-BLIGHT—OYSTER HUNTING—FISHING CLUB—PICNICS.

Early on the morning of the 25th June we were gliding past the entrance to Botany Bay, and with the glass could distinguish the monument erected to the memory of poor La Perouse by his compatriots, on the northern shore of that extensive basin;—Botany Bay! so undeservedly yet indelibly branded as the head quarters of exiled felony—the terrestrial purgatory of Britain's evil-doers. Undeservedly, I say, because this harbour, originally chosen by Captain Phillip for the first convict settlement in New South Wales, was, on trial, found unfit for the purpose, and was accordingly in a few weeks abandoned for the neighbouring position of Port Jackson.

So well founded were the objections of Phillip to Botany Bay as a point of location, that even at the present day, although only seven miles from the great city of Sydney, there are scarcely a dozen houses on its margin, whose circuit can hardly be less than twenty miles.

Shortly before midday, the *Agincourt* passed close under the lighthouse of Port Jackson, perched upon a horizontally stratified cliff, descending plumb 300 feet into deep water; and precisely at 12 o'clock we entered "The Heads," that grand and appropriate portal of one of the noblest harbours in the world.

Working against an adverse wind, under charge of a pilot, the good ship zigzagged her course along the seven miles of inland water connecting The Heads with Sydney Cove; and at 3 P.M. of an Australian mid-wintry but splendid day the anchor was dropped in that snug little haven, within a biscuit's cast of the spot where, in the year 1788, the first Governor of New South Wales pitched the tents of the first British plantation in New Holland.

In spite of the undoubted beauties of Port Jackson, its glorious expanse of smooth water, its numerous lovely islets, its sweeping bays and swelling headlands, wooded down to the water edge and crested with handsome villas, there is to the stranger's eye something singularly repulsive in the leaden tint of the gum-tree foliage, and in the dry and sterile sandstone from which it springs.

The trees, indeed, have no bare branches, as in an English winter, excepting those killed by bush-fires; but the stiff hard leaves, which seem expressly formed

to resist the chill wind and powerful sun of an Australian winter, although nominally evergreen, but little deserve the epithet.

On this day there was no want of cheerful accessories in and about the harbour. Its bosom was studded with swarms of pleasure-boats; the coves were crowded with shipping. As our vessel neared the shores in the process of beating, we saw parties of horsemen and horsewomen cantering along the crescented slips of sand, carriages appearing and disappearing among the trees; and, on a headland close to the town, were promenading groups of well-dressed people, amongst whom might be seen the uniform of officers and soldiers, making up a gay prism of colours in the bright sunlight.

The weather must have been by the colonists considered cold, although we, after the alternations of a long voyage, did not find it so. All those who came down to the harbour to meet the ship were warmly wrapped up; and one gentleman's teeth, I observed, absolutely chattered under a pile of mufflers.

The Health-officer and a Post-office functionary came off to us in a boat pulled by prisoners. I believe I expected to see these men chained like galley-slaves to their oars; and was a little disappointed, perhaps, when I found them differing in nowise from an ordinary boat's crew, except in their bad rowing. So, likewise, on finding myself dodged from deck to cuddy, from cabin to poop, by a keen-looking young man, who addressed me in a low earnest voice, I expected to have my pocket picked; when, turning sternly upon him for explanation, I discovered his intentions to be strictly honour-

able. He was a newspaper reporter, doubly anxious for news because the *Agincourt*, being the March mail-packet from England, had arrived before the February packet. This sharp caterer for the Sydney quidnuncs, had heard that I had brought on board at Deal the latest English journal. I handed it to him, with the request that it might be returned when done with. He vanished over the ship's side, and I never saw him nor my newspaper again.

Like the generality of mercantile towns, viewed from the sea, Sydney, although containing nearly 50,000 inhabitants, presents from this aspect no very imposing appearance. It might be Waterford, or Wapping, with a dash of Nova Scotian Halifax.

The main streets, built along the crests and flanks of two or three highish ridges trending inland, are unseen from the shipping; but this very peculiarity of its site gives to Sydney a greater extent of deep water frontage than, perhaps, any other commercial city in the universe. These spines of land, or rather rock, subdivide the south shore of Port Jackson, at the spot where Sydney has arisen like a huge mushroom, into numerous small and deep basins, among which the principal are Wooloomooloo Bay, Farm Cove, sacred to H. M.'s ships; Sydney Cove, and Darling Harbour; the whole presenting capabilities for natural wharfage, such as I have never seen equalled.

The new Government-house, a really handsome structure of stone, with its gardens and home domain, occupies the promontory between Wooloomooloo Bay and Sydney Cove; and thus, although close to the town, its

privacy is completely secured by a park paling drawn across the neck of the peninsula. Beyond this fence the outer domain, an extensive government reserve, acts as one of the lungs of Sydney. Its circuit embraces nearly four miles of carriage-road and foot-path, cleverly and tastefully planned by Mrs. Macquarie, wife of the governor of that name, and executed under her direction by convict labour. To this lady the citizens of Sydney are indebted for a *plaisance* such as few of the capitals of Europe can surpass in extent and beauty.

At the head of Farm Cove, encompassed by the outer domain, are the Government Botanic Gardens, comprising several acres of shrubbery and flower-garden, in which specimens of the vegetable productions of almost every part of the globe are assembled for the study of the scientific, and for the instruction and wonderment of the uninitiated.

But let us set foot upon the soil of Australia before we attempt to sketch its features. It will be honest, I think, to lay open to my reader first impressions as they stand noted in my diary of 1846. He will find, probably, that the more my acquaintance with the colony became matured, the more benignant became my feelings towards it — a progressive appreciation, surely more satisfactory than an over sanguine first view, chilling by degrees down to zero.

A most kind offer of bed and board from an old friend of my family met me ere I disembarked; but preferring independence, I declined this hospitality; and landing solus at the bottom of George-street, I strolled, stick in hand, my man following with my portmanteau

in a cab, up to Petty's hotel, a respectable, quiet establishment, where I remained about a fortnight before my tent was permanently pitched in Sydney. I passed my first Australian evening in rambling slowly up George-street, the main artery of the city, and down Pitt-street, the second in rank; and should have been truly astonished at the immense extent of the former thoroughfare—the Broadway and Oxford-street of the Antipodes, 2½ miles long—and at the endless succession of well supplied and well lighted shops in both, but that certain Sydneyites, my fellow passengers, had in so loud and high a key chanted the praises of their adopted city, that, on actual inspection, I had nothing to do but to come tumbling down the gamut until I reached my own pitch note.

What greater injustice to man or matter than this super-laudation! Niagara cannot bear it. What more need be said?

Passing through the Barrack-square to mine inn, shortly before nine o'clock I found tattoo going on, the drums and fifes of the 99th regiment rattling away Mrs. Waylett's pretty old song of, "I'd be a Butterfly," in the most spirited style, just as though we were not 16,000 miles from the Horse Guards! It was the first note of music I had heard since leaving home; and I do not know when a more soothing and agreeable sensation pervaded my mind than at that moment, as I stood listening under the bright moonlight of this "far countrie" to a parcel of old well-remembered airs, that had been discarded by the London butcher-boys a quarter of a century ago; listening among a crowd of

small boys and big blackguards, all of whom, according to the habit of new comers, I fully believed to be convicts and their spawn, intent one and all on exercising a right of search into the stranger's pockets.

June 26th. — Sydney wants the foreign and exotic interest of other of our colonial capitals. Neither the aborigines themselves, nor any object belonging to them, nor the natives of any other country, mix with the nearly exclusively British population and products of the place. Now and then a Chinaman, with his pig's-tail and eyes, and his poking shoulders, crosses your vision, as if he had dropped, not from the clouds—although the Celestials have a right to be expected thence—but from a willow pattern soup-plate. Perhaps a specimen or two of the New Zealander, brown, broad, brawny, and deeply tattooed, may occur. In the outskirts of the town, a chattering, half-besotted group of the wretched natives of New Holland itself, tall, and thin even to emaciation, with great woolly heads and beards and flat features, may be seen, grinning and gesticulating in each other's ugly faces in loud dispute, or making low and graceful bows, worthy of the old school, whilst begging a copper, or "white money," from the passengers, as they loiter near the door of some pot-house.

Sydney is, I think, more exclusively English in its population than either Liverpool or London. Were it not for an occasional orange-tree in full bloom or fruit in the back yard of some of the older cottages, or a flock of little green parrots whistling as they alight for a moment on a housetop, one might fancy himself at Brighton or Plymouth.

The construction of the buildings is blameably ill-suited to a semi-tropical climate,—barefaced, smug-looking tenements, without verandahs or even broad eaves. This fault extends to the Government House, whose great staring windows are doomed to grill unveiled, because, forsooth, any excrescence upon their stone mullions would be heterodox to the order or disorder of its architecture. Surely a little composite licence might have been allowable in such a case and climate.

Many of the private residences of Sydney and its suburbs are both handsome and comfortable,—most of them crowded with expensive furniture, therein differing from the practice in most warm countries; where the receiving-rooms and bed-rooms contain little beyond the muniments necessary for sitting and lying, and those of the plainest, hardest, and most undraped description.

The majority of the public buildings evince proof of the profusion of fine sandstone on the spot,—for a house may here be almost entirely built of the material dug from its foundation,—as well as of the solid advantages arising from convict labour, especially when so powerful an agent is wielded by a governor of such strong masonic predilections as he whose name is affixed to the façades of most of the Sydney public institutions.* These edifices suit their purposes, no doubt, but have nothing, I think, to recommend them to the eye.

On the subject of public places, the fact that the "Hyde Park" of Sydney is merely a fenced common, without a tree or a blade of grass, and the "Hyde Park

* Macquarie.

Barracks" a convict *dépôt*, grates somewhat unpleasantly on the feeling of one lately arrived from London.

In strolling homewards late this evening, I was once more attracted by the sound of music. Led by the ear, I found myself looking down into the windows of a vault or crypt below a very handsome chapel. There was evidently eating and drinking going on with great earnestness, and speechifying intermingled with them; and a brass band was undoubtedly playing a variety of jolly airs under the floor of a place of worship. This seemed somewhat eccentric, I thought; however, I learnt from a bystander that the meeting was nothing more than a subterranean Teetotal festival, whereof I was then taking a birds'-eye view from the pavement.

June 29th.—The well-known hospitable spirit of the Sydney society developed itself in my favour this morning, in the shape of a mound of visiting cards, interlarded with numerous invitations to dinners and evening parties.

I dined this day with my respected chief, Lieutenant-General Sir Maurice O'Connell, at his beautiful villa of Tarmons; and I mention the circumstance merely to have an opportunity of remarking, that there were brisk coal fires burning in both dining and drawing-room, and that the general appliances of the household, the dress of the guests and the servants, were as entirely English as they could have been in London. The family likeness between an Australian and an Old Country dinner-party became, however, less striking when I found myself sipping doubtfully, but soon swallowing with relish, a plate of wallabi-tail soup, followed by a slice of boiled schnapper, with oyster sauce. A haunch of kan-

garoo venison helped to convince me that I was not in Belgravia. A delicate wing of the wonga-wonga pigeon with bread sauce, and a dessert of plantains and loquots, guavas and mandarine oranges, pomegranates and cherimoyas, landed my imagination at length fairly at the Antipodes.

July 1st.—House-rent in Sydney is very high, and vacant houses are very scarce. The first I took consisted of seven small rooms, without stable, courtyard, pump, kitchen range, or even bells to the rooms: rent £100 per annum for the bare walls. It was situated in the heart of the town, or at least in its pericardium. The street contained, I think, upwards of three hundred houses; and I was compelled to be particular in giving my address —— Street *North*, because its other extremity tapered off into impropriety. I had fallen by accident into the legal quarter of the city; indeed my house had been built expressly to form two sets of chambers for gentlemen of the long robe. The doorposts of nearly all my neighbours were scored with the names of barristers, attorneys, solicitors, notaries-public, and other limbs of the law, who, albeit rivals in the trade, contrive to play into each other's hands to the detriment of the public pocket.

My street abutted upon the Supreme Court, and I was perfectly astonished to see the number of sleek and spruce and bewigged personages, who soon after breakfast came swooping down from their rookery upon the field of their daily labours. Litigation is the luxury of young communities, as it is of *parvenus* who have only just acquired the power to afford it.

New South Wales early took the epidemic in its most virulent form. It was fatal in many instances to the fortunes of those infected; and some nice little incomes were picked up by the leading advocates and their providers. It is but just to add, that these were for the most part as freely spent as quickly gathered. I have been assured by an influential member of the profession, that the palmy days of the law have passed away in Sydney. There are probably more gleaners of the profits; not, I should imagine, a thinner crop of "cornstalks" * for the harvest,—some of them as long in the ear as could be wished.

In a country where highly educated men are comparatively rare, those brought up to the law are valuable public servants. Several of the ablest and most prominent members of the Legislative Council,—certainly those best worth hearing,—are of the forensic order.

The prospect from my windows was anything but agreeable; for they looked upon the backs of a cluster of St. Giles-like tenements, across a piece of waste ground, unbuilt on because litigated, which seemed to be the central *dépôt* for all the nuisances of the *arrondissement*,—where all sorts of rubbish might be shot, or at least *was* shot, from a load of soot to a proscribed cat or the decimated fraction of a litter of puppies.

Here, in the warm summer nights, many a drunken outcast of the pot-houses took his rest without fear of the watch-house: nor had he much cause for fear; the solitary policeman crawling stupidly along the middle of

* Cornstalk is the national nickname of the Australian white man.

the street, and the solitary lamp dim twinkling in the shadowy distance, were little likely to discover or disturb his slumbers.

The lighting, and still more the paving of the Sydney streets, are a disgrace to the city and its corporation, as well as to the people who tolerate the ill-performed duties of the latter well-paid body. The *trottoirs* are full (and were to the last day of my residence in New South Wales) of the most ingenious traps, dangerous to the limbs, if not to the lives of the passengers. The sewerage of the town is also shamefully bad, though no city possesses a site more favourable for that essential. Most of the drains are on the surface, and during the long periods of drought the accumulation of filth becomes beyond measure disgusting. At length comes the expected "Brickfielder," drifting the pulverized abominations into every pore of the human frame, and every crevice of the houses. It is closely followed by a flood of rain, which sets all the gutters in motion, and, fortunately for the citizens, carries away down to the sea in its torrents the thousand specimens of decomposed matter, which have been left to rot in the streets.

The thoroughfares are infested by an innumerable host of apparently ownerless dogs—innumerable in spite of the Dog Act, that has been in force ever since the Government order fulminated against the canine race in 1812.

The lawless brutes range at will the town and suburbs, to the torment and terror of the lieges. The horseman, who presumes to indulge in any pace faster than a walk, has, without any ambition of becoming a master of hounds, a pack at his heels so addicted to "riot," that he

may consider himself fortunate if he escape Actæon's fate. Many a luckless wight have I watched flying along the street in a cloud of dust and dogs, fresh detachments of curs debouching upon him from every alley and court, until they vanished together round a corner, leaving me to imagine the finish.

It is still worse when the military band is playing, as it does once or twice a week, in the Government domain. All the fair and fashionable are stationed around in their carriages. Let an equestrian exquisite make the smallest effort at lady-killing in the shape of a curvet or a riding-school canter on the tempting turf, and instantly, from among the legs of the pedestrian spectators, rush forth the hitherto unseen canine crew, and away, away through the gum-trees and over the drain-grips, fly horseman, steed, and pack. Like Mazeppa,

> " He hears them on his track—
> The troop comes hard upon his back."

They are lost in the wood; when suddenly the horse reappears on the scene, still chased by the pestilent brutes; or if it happens that the cavalier has kept his seat and got rid of his foes, he is glad to escape the ironical condolement of his friends by stealing away from the scene of his discomfiture.

But more serious consequences arise sometimes from the stray dogs. Two or three times I have been the horrified witness of attacks upon children by large and fierce dogs, which would have ended fatally but for the prompt help of passers-by.

I once saw a powerful mastiff seize a horse by the throat, between the shafts of a gig, and pull it to the

ground; nor did the ferocious beast quit its hold until killed by a blow with an iron bar.

Some of the Newfoundland dogs in this country are the finest I have ever seen—much larger and handsomer than the true Labrador dog, which is neither very tall, nor very curly in the coat.

Hound-like dogs, with a good deal of the shape and colour of the English fox-hound, but with none of his countenance, figure here as street mongrels.

The Danish dog, the privileged attendant of aristocratic equipages in Europe, is seen in twos and threes under every baker's cart, or joining in the foraging parties of nameless curs.

I have seen, too, with amusement, pointer puppies in the streets "drawing" up to poultry and pigeons, thereby unconsciously betraying their descent from some poaching ancestor, transported probably, together with his master, for that crime so heinous at all times in the eyes of country gentlemen and justices—now so lightly punished.

From my sitting room, in —— Street, I have often witnessed more of a good run, and without any expense of nerve or horseflesh, than many of the loudest post-prandial sportsmen can boast with truth of having done in a Leicestershire winter. I have seen poor Tabby 'found' in an area entrance or stable-yard; 'unkenneled' cleverly by a volunteer scratch pack ranging in height from that of a donkey to a turnspit; and, after a ring or two on the bit of waste land opposite, "run into," "killed," and "broken up," in undoubted style!

With varied success have I, Quixotte-like, sallied

forth to the rescue of some poor goat, whose piteous bleat called eloquently for help;—pleasing mead of my broomstick's prowess when I received the blessing of some warmhearted old Irishwoman, for saving the life of her "bit of a kid—the craythur!"

That picturesque animal, the goat, by-the-by, forms a conspicuous item of the Sydney street menagerie—amounting to a pest little less dire than the plague of dogs. Nearly every cottage has its goat or family of goats. They ramble about the highways and by-ways, picking up a hap-hazard livelihood during the day; and going home willingly or compulsorily in the evening to be milked.

Woe betide the suburban garden whose gate is left for a moment unclosed. Every blade of vegetation within and without their reach has been previously noted by these half-starved vagrants. In an instant the bearded tribes rush in—where angels (terrestrial) almost feared to tread; and in a few seconds, roses, sweet peas, stocks, carnations, &c. &c. are as closely nibbled down as though a flight of locusts had bivouacked for a week on the spot; and the neat flower-beds are dotted over with little cloven feet, as if ten thousand infantine devils had been dancing there—a juvenile sabbat.

July 22*d*.—Extract from the *Price Current* of the week:—flour, 16*l*. per ton; bread, 4*d*. the 2lb. loaf; potatoes, 6*s*. 6*d*. to 8*s*. per cwt.; butter, 1*s*. 10*d*. to 2*s*. 6*d*. per lb.; fowls, 2*s*. 6*d*. to 3*s*. per pair; turkeys, 7*s*. to 9*s*. a head; beef and mutton, from 1*d*. to 2½*d*. per lb.: hay, 8*s*. 6*d*. per cwt., Van Diemen's Land Hay, 7*l*. to 8*l*. a ton; straw, 3*s*. 6*d*. per cwt.; eggs, 1*s*. 6*d*. to 2*s*. per dozen; bottled beer, English, 14*s*. per dozen.

These are not prices likely to tempt immigrants. Ireland could feed her man infinitely cheaper. Fortunately articles of subsistence are usually less expensive, as may be seen in the Appendix.*

It has often been remarked that the profuse meat diet of the English in this country tends rather to injure than to fortify the health, and to diminish rather than augment the physical power. The inhabitants of Sydney struck me at first sight as looking pale and puffy compared with their fellow Britons at home. Many of the Cornstalks, or Colonial-born men, are tall and large-boned, but the majority of those attaining a standard above the middle height are spare, hollow chested, and have a certain weather-worn and time-worn look beyond their years. If one sees a ruddy face, it is sure to belong to a sea-faring man, an up-country bushman whose cheeks are burnt by exposure into an uniform red bronze, or to the rubicund Boniface of some tavern, whose ever-blooming roses have been well irrigated by strong waters. The women of the poorer classes look prematurely old; many of them are absolutely frightful, yet appear to delight in tawdry dress. The children in the streets and lanes are, on the contrary, so lovely, that it is almost impossible to believe them the offspring of the hags, their mothers.

Poor hard-working creatures! poor faithful helpmates! well may youth and health and beauty early wither before the manifold troubles, mental and bodily, that fall to their lot in this colony. The day-labourers of Sydney are notoriously idle, drunken, and dissolute.

* Appendix A, vol. iii.

Earning 3*s*., 4*s*. and 5*s*. a-day, they will work perhaps four out of the seven, and during the remainder squander their gains in drink and riot, leaving their wretched families to feed themselves as they can.

The climate, too, must be highly inimical to feminine good looks, at least as far as complexion is concerned. At this season the atmospheric changes are very great, and very sudden. A bright sun scorches you, a dry cold wind cuts you in two. You shrink from the ardent rays of the former, yet in the shade you shiver. Both in summer and winter the well-known Australian dust, especially in the sandstone districts, keeps the face and eyes in constant irritation. Your hair feels like hay, your skin like parchment. Unless you are a very even-souled fellow your temper even grows gritty under the annoying infliction.

Yet with all this it is a glorious climate!—glorious in its visible beauty—glorious in its freedom from lethal disorders—priceless, with respect to this latter feature, in the eyes of those who have known what it is to serve in countries where Death multiform rides on the wings of the wind, lurks in forest and swamp, and riots in the crowded emporium.

August 1*st*.—Sydney is not without its public amusements for the stranger as well as the resident. Of the Theatre I may fairly say that, as far as dramatic talent is concerned, it is conducted at the least as well as the generality of provincial houses in England. To be sure, we are compelled to be satisfied all the year round with the efforts of stationary performers; for it must be an eccentric Star indeed which would shoot so far out of its orbit as to reach New South Wales.

In decency of demeanour the audience of the Sydney Theatre Royal is a prodigy compared with that of similar establishments in the seaport towns of the old country. The "gods" are particularly well-behaved. Even in the trying experiment, which I witnessed more than once, of a comic singer inviting the gallery to join him in a chorus, the immortals met the proposal with great moderation, and contrived to testify their approval without cudgelling down the front of the circle.

The dress-boxes are always unpeopled, unless an impulse be given by a bespeak or by the benefit of a favourite. These appeals act as a sort of mental gadfly on the society. The herd rushes together with one consent, and disports itself in crowded discomfort; and once more, for a month perhaps, the play-goer, whom a love of the drama only attracts, has the house all to himself.

When the Sydney Theatre was first established by permission of the governor, "Her Majesty's servants" were Her Majesty's prisoners! In the pit of the Sydney Theatre one misses the numerous bald heads of an European *parterre*, for the people of New South Wales have not yet had time to grow old. On the other hand, the eyes of the stranger wander with surprise over the vast numbers of new-born babies in the pit—three or four dozen little sucklings taking their natural refection, whilst their mothers seem absorbed in the interest of the piece; their great long-legged daddies meanwhile sprawling over the benches in the simplest of costumes, —a check shirt, for instance, wide open at the breast, no braces, moleskins, and a cabbage-tree hat.

It is a pleasant thing to see these good folks thoroughly enjoying themselves in this manner on a Saturday night

— a week's wages and the door-key in their pockets, and all the family cares deferred till Monday morning.

Every one knows—at least every foreigner knows—how cold and undemonstrative is an English audience. Perhaps the warmth of the climate infuses a degree of fervour into a Sydney "house." Certain it is that the "poor players" get a fairer share of applause than the same performances would secure at home. It would be a lesson to the used-up man of the world, to witness the raptures with which some of the public favourites, and their efforts histrionic, musical, and saltatory, are received and rewarded. Oh! it is delicious to mark the gratified countenances, and to hear the thundering plaudits which are especially awarded to the latter branch of theatric art. Well may Madame * * *, the Sydney Columbine and Maîtresse de Danse, most spherical of Sylphides, bounce like an Indian-rubber ball; well may Signor * * * *, Harlequin and Dancing-master, half kill his fatted calves in acknowledgment of so much flattering approbation!

There are to be found round the doors of the Sydney theatre a sort of "loafers," known as the Cabbage-tree mob—a class whom, in the spirit of the ancient tyrant, one might excusably wish had but one nose, in order to make it a bloody one! These are an unruly set of young fellows, native born generally, who, not being able, perhaps, to muster coin enough to enter the house, amuse themselves by molesting those who can afford that luxury. Dressed in a suit of fustian or colonial tweed, and the emblem of their order, the low-crowned cabbage-palm hat, the main object of their enmity seems to be the ordinary black headpiece worn by respectable

persons, which is ruthlessly knocked over the eyes of the wearer as he passes or enters the theatre.

The first time I attended this house, I gave my English servant, a stout and somewhat irascible personage, a ticket for the pit. Unaware of the propensities of the Cabbagites, he was by them furiously assailed—for no better reason apparently than because, like "noble Percy," "he wore his *beaver* up,"—and, his hat being driven down over his eyes and nose, in his blind rage he let fly an indiscriminate "one, two," the latter of which took effect upon a policeman's snout!

"Hinc!" a night in the watch-house, and the necessity of proving in the morning that the "glaring case of assaulting a constable in the execution of his duty" was not intentional and "of malice aforethought."

On one occasion I recollect two clergymen being much maltreated by members of this mischievous mob.

Much has been spoken and written by influential persons in England about the hideous depravity of the Sydney populace. I do not think they deserve that character. Although the streets are ill lighted, and the police inefficient in number and organization, Sydney appears to me to have on the whole a most orderly and well-conducted population. Public-house licences are so profitable a source of public revenue, that perhaps too many of these conveniences for crime are permitted to exist; yet drunkenness is kept quite as well out of sight as in English towns; and, although a pretty strong squad of disorderlies figure in the morning reports of the Police courts, the better behaved inhabitants are but little annoyed by their misdemeanours.

All strangers notice with praise the extreme tranquillity

of the streets at night. Whatever debaucheries may be going on "à huis clos"—and Sydney is no purer perhaps than other large seaport towns—they are not prominently offensive. If a noctambulist yourself, you may indeed encounter, towards the small hours, an occasional night-errant wandering in search of adventures, or having found some to his great personal damage; but he is an exception to the general rule of the social quietude of the Sydney thoroughfares.

On occasions of public excitement the people of Sydney appeared to me to be not only orderly, but even unusually apathetic. To be sure, there has been heard of a case of a Police Magistrate of sixteen stone being driven by a shower of brickbats to put his horse at the railings in Hyde Park, during the polling of an election; and I remember one or two ludicrous instances of civic panic, on account of juvenile rioters breaking windows and squibbing off fire-works on Guy Faux day. It nearly went the length of moving the Legislature to proceed against the unfledged rebels by Act of Council —instead of punishing them summarily by act of whipping. But these, again, are solitary facts. I do not believe, in short, that person or property, morals or decency are more liable to peril, innocence to outrage, inexperience to imposition, in Sydney, than in London or Paris. On the contrary, I am convinced, that from our own country, not only *might* come to New South Wales, but actually and frequently *do* come, individuals of every order of society—from the practised *debauché* of high life to the outcast of the London back-slums—capable of giving lessons in vice, in their several degrees,

to the much abused Sydneyites, and who do absolutely astonish the colonials by their superior proficiency.

I will go so far as to admit, that some of the wildest disturbers of the public peace of Sydney are occasionally to be traced to the garrison and to the shipping. Now and then one hears of a couple of grenadiers clearing a taproom, and a knot of A B seamen may be seen battling the watch, or experimentalizing in horsemanship, to the danger of all land-lubbers.

The public prints take care that red-coat revels shall not be lost to the world for want of chroniclers. The words "Military Outrage" invoke general attention and indignation, and the bitterest terms of newspaper vituperation are hurled at the "ruffian soldiery."

In 1849 and 1850, when the roads round Sydney were infested by highwaymen, and desperate burglaries occurred nightly in the city and its purlieus;—when hundreds of well-known convicts or expirees, many of them from Van Diemen's Land, were prowling about with no obvious mode of livelihood—their characters and haunts well known—the most shabby and absurd attempts were made to trace these offences to the soldiers. The army, as it is now-a-days, would be better appreciated by the good citizens of Sydney and some other places, if they could have a taste of one of the "fast" regiments of former days—just to put them through a course of Tom-and-Jerryism, and other by-gone branches of garrison discipline.

Sept. 1st.—The number of auctions daily going on in Sydney is quite extraordinary; not auctions for the purpose of selling off the houses and effects of departed or

departing persons—though these happen often enough, too often for one's belief in the permanent prosperity of the community—but for the disposal by wholesale of imported goods, or by retail of tradesmen's stock on hand. A stranger would almost suppose that the buyers and sellers of the colony were too idle to transact business without the intermediation of a paid agent. From the sale of an allotment of Crown land, or the lease of a squatting run, to a "prime lot" of pork, pickles, or curry powder, all are equally submitted to public outcry.

The newspapers teem with advertisements such as these :—

"ABSTRACT OF SALES BY AUCTION THIS DAY."

"Messrs. * * * and * * *, at their Mart, at 11 o'clock, 150 doz. kangaroo skins, a second-hand gig, ship biscuit, baby-linen, damaged ironmongery, bottled fruits, castor oil, Canary birds, Bohemian glass, accordions, and the effects of a deceased clergyman, comprising robes, &c."

Again—

"Mr. * * * will have the honour to offer to public competition, at 12 o'clock on Monday, the 4th inst., the Crow's Nest Station, in the District of Moreton Bay, with 10 000 sheep; after which, arrowroot, blacking, lime-juice, lozenges, ladies' companions, jams, bath-bricks, damaged gunny bags, Turkey figs, tooth-brushes, 12,000 feet of prime cedar plank, a four-roomed house, an anchor and chain, a mare, a horse, and twenty pigs.

"At 3 P.M. precisely, the newly rigged copper-bottomed clipper, *Mary Anne*, well known in the trade! one gross of egg-spoons, a bass-viol, a superior Europe feather-bed, two lots of land, two bales super calico, Old Tom, soup and bouilli, toys, cutlery, and a cottage piano."

The chief attendants at these public sales are brokers and keepers of miscellaneous stores, many of them Jews either by persuasion or by descent. Those of the latter category modify their names, so as to be as little as pos-

sible Hebraic; but there is no mistaking their cast of physiognomy, the most unchanging and arbitrary in the world. Temporarily considered, it is not a bad sign when this people, or the Quaker tribe, throng to a place. There is honey making, depend on it, where such are seen to swarm. Sometimes, indeed, they accumulate an undue share to themselves, as may be witnessed in certain Irish towns. But they are generally good subjects, and obey the laws.

The Sydney gentleman has no chance at these auctions; for he is known and watched by the brokers and jobbers aforesaid, and is either "bid up" to a ruinous price, and left to carry off his dearly-bought whistle, or is "bid down," and cowed out of his lot by the apparently fierce resolve of his professional rival to have it at any cost.

On one occasion, when venturing a diffident bid for a pair of carriage-horses, I was informed by a spectator that it was "no use," for that "the stout party in the yaller veskit, over yonder, wanted them very bad, and would have them." So after lifting the animals to a figure considerably above their worth, I was fain to yield to inexorable necessity and to the wealthy emancipist and whilom bankrupt, who had resolved to drive the highest steppers in Sydney.

Some persons have a taste for public outcries. In Calcutta they used to be—are now, I dare say—quite the rage. Habit soon teaches one the true value of every article offered for sale. Amateurs generally enjoy the fruits of this experience in a house-full of useless lumber.

During the first year or two of my residence in Sydney, the sellings-off of families going home or into retirement

were very numerous. An auction at a house of this description is quite a fashionable lounge. Gentlemanly auctioneers, whom you hesitate whether or not to admit on terms of social equality, address you by name, assure you that the article is one of undoubted *vertù*—that you cannot let it go at a price so absurdly low—that you cannot do without it. You buy something because the salesman is eloquent, because he has flattered your taste, because the late owner was a good fellow—not because you want it. Thus articles of household furniture in Sydney become migratory, and are recognised as old acquaintances bought and sold twenty times over.

I do not mean to hint that Sydney has not a fair share of permanent and well-rooted residents; but there do occasionally happen some almost meteor-like apparitions and disappearances among the most opulent circles—perfectly astounding to quiet people drawing a quarterly or monthly salary and living within it. An unusually grand ball or fête is, in such cases, a virulent symptom; —the crisis is not far off!—the torch flares up—goes out; and all the world, except those most concerned, are left in the dark—as to the cause.

On the subject of street sales of miscellaneous wares—which I have said are not lucrative pursuits to the inexperienced frequenter—I have a little anecdote "to submit to public notice," unique in its way, and "a genuine article." A young military friend of mine, strolling one morning down George-street in desultory quest of amusement, stepped from mere curiosity into an auction-room where a sale was going on. Whether he did or did not nod his head at the salesman, is still doubtful; but it is

a fact that a lot, comprising "50 gross of bottles of mixed pickles," was knocked down to him ere he had time to cross himself. Startling dilemma for a well-dressed young gentleman, revelling in a salary of five shillings and threepence per day, drawing his pay from the paymaster and his pickles from the messman! "Some have greatness thrust on them,"—but imagine six hundred bottles of mixed pickles, to be paid for on delivery, being thrust upon a subaltern of a marching regiment!

Ninety-nine out of a hundred youngsters would have been taken aback, would have loudly denied the transaction, or made some other false movement betraying perturbation. Not so my cool-headed young friend. Treating the sale as a matter of course, and awaiting the close of the auction, he commissioned the auctioneer to "put up" his newly-acquired property in several small lots. The result proved that the military purchaser was not quite so green as the gerkins he was dealing in; for he realized a handsome profit, and left the Mart, followed by the admiration of the oldest auction loungers present.

The night auction was common when I first arrived in New South Wales. I fancy this branch of the trade must have been since lopped off by legislative enactment, as I did not observe its occurrence later in my stay. It seemed specially intended for the disposal of articles "that love the shade," and for the spoliation of the raw emigrant. The *locale* of the night auction was usually some small open stall. A ragged old pauper was seen and heard ringing a large bell opposite the door. A shabby, but sharp-looking salesman, leaning over a horse-shoe counter, under the light of a huge but blear and

smoky lamp, arrested the passengers by a display of his wares. The idlers gradually curdled into a crowd. Delusive eloquence and a dim light did the rest.

But it is not only to public sales that newspaper notices direct the public attention, and stimulate the public indolence. Merchants, traders, agents, shopkeepers of all grades promulgate their wants or their goods on hand through these channels. Master and servant invite and proffer service by this means. At the head of a few of these entries, cut out of a file of journals before me, should be placed the following one. Published in England and Ireland, this advertisement alone, which has frequently appeared, should ensure to New South Wales what the colonists call "a copious and continuous stream of immigration."

> "J. K. Cleave, wholesale and retail butcher, will supply beef and mutton of good quality at 1*d*. per lb."

Think of that, ye Dorsetshire day-labourers! Think of that, ye Tipperary turf-cutters! Think of that, ye poor starving London needle-women, who

> "Stitch, stitch, stitch!
> In poverty, hunger and dirt,
> Sewing at once with a double thread
> A shroud as well as a shirt!"

Now for a *mélange*—or *macédoine* of advertisements—to all concerned. They are word for word as entered.

> "Wanted, immediately, a Blacksmith, a pair of Sawyers, a Man Cook, a Governess, and a Housekeeper.
> "(Signed) * * * General Agency Office."

> "Funerals.—Mrs. B——, Undertaker, has removed from * * * to * * * street, and continues to conduct funerals with respectability and solemnity on moderate terms."

The following notice, lamentable to relate, is only one of scores of similar import that catch the eye of the newspaper reader.

"CAUTION.—Whereas my wife, Margaret ——, having left her home without cause or provocation, all persons are hereby cautioned against giving her credit on my account."

"A FALSE report have been asserted through the town, that Madame Farrelly gave up her establishment. Such is not the case; she re-opened on the 14th instant."

"TO STONEMASONS.—Wanted, immediately, six good hands; wages, 6*s.* 6*d.* per day. Apply to John Revell, Cole's-buildings, Upper Fort-street, Sydney. February, 1852."

John Eldridge, dyer and scourer, advertises himself as "The man who dyes for the ladies."

"The Art of Fencing."—Mr. Hardman, professor of fencing, late serjeant-major in H.M. 80th Regiment of Foot, after setting forth in glowing language the benefits of this "useful art," proceeds to state his terms:—

"TERMS (for two lessons each week).—Gentlemen set up, taught marching and fencing, 1½ guineas per quarter. Young Ladies set up, taught to square their toes, march, and enter a room gracefully, 1 guinea per quarter."

In pleasing succession to the above athletic pursuits, comes the following refreshing notice:—

"IMPORTANT NOTICE.

"WILLIAM BLYTH having received, per *Hamlet*, one of Masters' Double Action Patent Freezing Apparatus, is now prepared to supply his friends with Ices from one to two o'clock P.M., and from four to five daily (wet and cold weather excepted), and on Theatre nights only from nine to ten o'clock."

The two next appeared in the order in which I have left them.

"LIGHT-HOUSE HOTEL.

"MR. A. GRAY begs to remind his old friends and the lovers of harmony, that he has re-opened his Free and Easy on Saturday evenings. A professional gentleman presides at the pianoforte from 8 to 12.

"The chair will be taken by Mr. Emerson, at 9 o'clock.

"Bathurst and Sussex-streets."

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"RIGHTEOUS PATH SOCIETY.

"FIRST ANNIVERSARY DINNER, to take place at Mr. Harris's, Jew's Harp, Brickfield-hill, on Monday, November 5, 5610.

"Tickets to be had at Mr. Harris's, and of the Honorary Secretary, 601, Lower George-street.

"W. L. PYKE, *Hon. Sec.*"

"CAUTION.

"I HEREBY caution all persons from purchasing any cattle from Frances Cavin, my wife or her son or any other person branded HC on near rump, running at Buckamell Creek Station, district of Liverpool Plains.

"September 30. "H. C."

"TO ALL TRUE BRITONS.

"A BARON of Beef and Plum Pudding will be on the table at Entwisle's Hotel at one o'clock this day, Sept. 28, 1848."

"BOARD AND LODGING for a single Gentleman, with use of a saddle horse and pianoforte, at one guinea a week. Apply, &c."

"MEDICAL CONTRACTS—TO THE TRADESMEN OF SYDNEY.

"A MARRIED Medical Man, of long standing, and *great practical experience* in his profession, and who has *no intention of leaving the colony*, is desirous of entering into contracts with a draper, grocer, butcher, baker, and shoemaker, to supply them and their families with professional attendance and medicine *upon terms of mutual advantage.* Private families contracted with upon moderate terms, and the highest testimonials and references submitted. Address, A. Z., (post-paid) *Herald* Office."

See what "*Ladies*" have to descend to when they emigrate.

"ADVERTISEMENT.

"A LADY, lately arrived in the colony from England, wants a situation as housekeeper and lady's maid. She possesses a perfect knowledge of millinery and dress-making. Salary not so much an object as a respectable home. The country would be preferred. The most respectable references *will* be given. Address, J. C., *Herald* Office."

"*Slubber wanted*—apply &c." may to the many convey the idea of a mysterious craving.

Nor does the general reader feel capable of lecturing dogmatically upon the uses and abuses of "a *Double-action Crab Winch* for sale at, &c. &c."

"SLATES! SLATES!! SLATES!!!"

If it were not for the above heading, the political economist might deduce from what follows that the Imperial Government were about to make a frantic effort to rid the Old Country of certain objectionable members of the nobility—to establish an aristocracy in the colony—and at the same time to remedy the present inequality in the sexes in Australia!

"10,000 Duchesses, with nails.
5,000 Countesses, slightly damaged.
12,000 Ditto, much ditto
The whole without reserve!!"

A kindred announcement of a batch of "Damaged Grey Domestics" being in the market, suggests the idea of a consignment of superannuated housekeepers and "stumpt-up" butlers from home—quite good enough for colonial consumption;—whereas in fact it relates to

some household cloth rendered "filthy dowlas" by land or sea accident.

Need it be noted, that the quack professor of the day has a branch business in this colony? His advertisements announce a head-quarters agent for Sydney, with subalterns at different out-stations, each having in charge expense-magazines of pill cartridge, sufficient to sweep from the earth whole regiments of diseases—or patients. A nominal roll of the former—commencing with "Ague," and running through the alphabet to the V's and W's of nosology—attest the efficacy of the preparations.

Among the "cases" cited, a certain "earl" and other notables figure now and then at the Antipodes, as living proofs (some of them long dead) of miraculous cures at home. But a well-known influential squatter and merchant, residing in Sydney, is the chief agent's main hobby, as having "purchased and sent to his stations in the Bush 14*l*. worth of these valuable medicines!"

It is fair to say, that these nostrums are in great request among the hard living denizens of the distant interior, and, in the absence of doctors and druggists, are no doubt very useful antidotes to bad rum and indigestible "damper."

Physic, as an article of consumption, is seldom indulged in to excess, except by the *Malades Imaginaires* of high life. I have often thought that gallipotism owes much of its popularity with the non-working classes, to the natural love of talking about one's self. A man's doctor is perhaps the only person of his ac-

quaintance who will patiently endure the infliction. He is at least paid for it.

I take the liberty to close the subject of Sydney advertisements with the following notice:—

> "THE HANGMAN.—This official left Sydney yesterday for Bathurst, where work awaits him; from Bathurst he will proceed to Goulburn"

The shops of Sydney are well supplied, although the supply is sometimes uncertain; and it is this very uncertainty which causes, and perhaps in some degree excuses, the two price system which so disgusts the old country customer.

"What is the price of those sugar-tongs?"

Answer: "Five-and-six, sir."

"Very dear for Britannia!"

"Well, sir, say three-and-nine, although that price don't remunerate me."

"Perhaps not," mentally ejaculates the purchaser, "for such barefaced roguery must be expensive to keep up!"

"It was never manufactured at that price," is the common and often veracious comment of the colonial shopman; and the complacency arising from a good bargain is clouded by the reflection, that the poor seamstress or operative at home is the aboriginal and main sufferer.

However dear the majority of imported goods may be, "slops," (shade of the polished earl, shudder! for the "Chesterfield wrapper at *7s. 6d.*" is included in that term,) slops are nearly always cheap, for they are mostly the work of the wretched sisterhood of London needlewomen!

There is no necessity for persons coming to New South Wales to cumber themselves with a huge amount of baggage. There are excellent and skilful tradesmen of every sort in Sydney: coachmakers and tailors, who can build you a carriage or a coat that you may put yourself into with comfort and complacency; bootmakers, who will turn you out a pair of kangaroo skin Wellingtons, the softest of all leathers, that will do justice to your foot—all at Regent-street prices. If you are not particular, or in a hurry, or prefer putting on your clothes with a pitchfork, there are fifty warehouses where you may rig yourself, "my lord, from top to toe," in two minutes, and "at a very low figure."

There is one thing that, as an old traveller, I never go without, namely, a London saddle, by a first rate maker, (Wilkinson and Kidd are mine.) But as the assertion of this maxim in another colony brought down upon my shoulders the entire guild of the workers in pigskin, I say no more about it.

The out-door games of old England are kept up here with greater observance than in any other colony of my acquaintance. I have seen some excellent and spirited play in the cricket matches between the clubs of Sydney and the vicinity; and, when a little more attention shall be paid to round bowling and to costume, the game will be more effective, and the presence and encouragement of the fair sex will perhaps be secured. I rarely, or never, saw a lady at an Australian cricket match.

It is amusing and pleasant to see the minor games of the minor people come round in their seasons. In the keen weather of July the hoop has its sway. As a

pedestrian spectator—if you preserve a green recollection of your schoolboy days—you criticise with a bland and protective feeling the skilful inch-driving of the urchin's one-wheeled coach; but when, on horseback, you see the emblem of eternity abandoned by its guide just when it most needs his care, wabbling across your path, how differently do you regard this innocent toy and its innocent owner! You have the pleasing uncertainty whether your shying steed will get one or more of his legs within the iron circle, or whether all four will remain available for a fruitless gallop after the hop-o'-my-thumb offender.

The weather grows warmer, and the peg-top comes in, followed by marbles—both games of an exciting nature. The earnest little gamblers—for the winner, as you may recollect, pockets a handful of marbles as well as his opponent's "taw"—knuckle down in the middle of the street or pavement, and if you disturb the state of the game—look out, that's all.

In the cricket season the male portion of the rising generation are perfectly engrossed in the study of that noble game. Every possible imitation of a wicket forms the target for every possible object that schoolboy ingenuity can compel to do duty for a ball. Your milk-boy sets his can down, in open day, for the vegetable lad to have "only just one ball" at it with a turnip. Old women are continually seen scolding and threatening because their legs have, quite accidentally of course, been treated as a set of stumps.

One of the peculiarities of Sydney is the multitude of its gay equipages. In an English provincial town the

handsome barouche or chariot rolling down the main street attracts a certain degree of attention. It belongs, of a surety, to some civic notable or provincial grandee. In George-street or Pitt-street at three or four o'clock there are crowds of such carriages. Gay I have called them, and gay they are indeed, for the vehicles themselves are smart, and the fair ladies within them are often very smart; but they—the carriages—are generally ill-appointed and ill-driven, a fact by no means surprising, since many of the coachmen have tried every earthly trade before they took to the box. I myself possessed one whose previous calling had been that of a muffin baker. After he left my service I heard of him as a street watchman, a turnkey, and an office messenger.

From the bread-cart to the brougham may indeed be legitimate promotion; but that the shop-boy who has been accustomed to handle the ribands behind the counter should *eo facto* be capable of maintaining them with propriety and safety behind a footboard and a pair of blood bays; or that the runaway carpenter's apprentice should, *ex officio,* be eligible for the hammer-cloth, are *non sequiturs* too apparent to need comment.

Fellows like these come out to this colony with the most vague and aimless ideas, whereof I shall have to give some illustrations under the head of Immigration. Many of them, fit for nothing at home, are worthless here. Dodging from employment to employment, and suited to none, they only gain a livelihood in the absence of a really useful body of immigrants.

On the subject of equipages, the public carriages—cabs, as they are called--are certainly the best in the world. Generally clarences, with a pair of well-fed active horses, they have nothing of the old English hackney coach about them; and though some of the drivers are thorough-bred ruffians, they are kept in pretty good subjection by the regulations.

Mrs. Meredith it is, I think, who lashes with her clever pen the habit of the ladies of Sydney to make the dusty streets their favourite drive or walk. The fact is as true as it is astonishing—for I know of no town in the universe where fresh air is more necessary for the inhabitants; and there are few towns of co ordinate consequence so bountifully supplied with breathing places close at hand.

I have spoken of the Government domain, and its creation by convict labour under tasteful superintendence. The several entrances are close upon the town and suburbs. There are nearly four miles of drives through alternate open and wooded grounds, the greater part exposed to the sea-breeze, and opening upon cheerful views of the splendid harbour. There are shady paths, held sacred to foot-passengers, winding among the "tea-scrub," or skirting the rocky shores. There is a spacious grassy plain, where a battalion may manœuvre, and where the band plays for the amusement of the public once or twice a week. There are the Botanic Gardens, divided into two compartments; one laid out in formal squares, containing the floral produce of many widely distant lands, flourishing together here as they flourish nowhere else; the other more in the English

pleasure-ground style, embracing a wide circuit of the picturesque Farm Cove. There is a drive or ride of twelve or thirteen miles, to the lighthouse at the South Head and back, passing through such lovely scenery that, although enjoyed a thousand times, it never palled on my taste; and for the admirer of the wild and dreary there is, for equestrian exercise, the wide expanse of hill and swamp between the city and Botany Bay. There are all these healthful outlets from Sydney dust and heat, and yet, with the exception of the attendance at the band, a score of persons can rarely be counted in any of the spots I have enumerated.

I may except also the Gardens on a Sunday afternoon, when the shopocracy—a wealthy and comfortable class—resort in considerable numbers to catch a puff "of the briny," and take the creases out of their best suits. The Botanic Gardens at such times present a cheerful and pretty sight from any of the surrounding eminences, from a boat in the bay, or from the shipping.

The scene is still more lively on the annual or half-yearly Exhibition of the Australian Botanic and Horticultural Society, when many thousands assemble to inspect the fruits, flowers, and vegetables, and other colonial products, arranged in marquees, and to listen to the music of the regimental and city bands, sitting or strolling under the shadow of the trees of many climes, and looking forth upon the calm glassy cove dotted with boats, the opposite ridge of the Inner Domain, crowned with the vice-regal palace, the frigates riding at anchor off the Point, the less trim merchantmen in "the stream"

waiting for a wind, and the woody hills of the north shore in the back-ground.

There is immense competition amongst some half-dozen gentlemen and market-gardeners for the prizes given at this Exhibition. I can enjoy, but, having no science, cannot thoroughly appreciate rare plants. I felt more interest in the specimens of flax, silk, cotton, olive oil, wine,—all indigenous to the country, and only requiring time and experience to bring them to perfection.

Some of the producers evince their fealty to their native land by exhibiting specimens of her weeds, or more properly field-flowers, strangers to the colony, and difficult to rear in the climate. I found myself adoring a buttercup, idolizing a daisy, and ardently coveting possession of a glorious dandelion, which, classically labelled "Leontodon taraxacum," occupied one of the high places of the Exhibition, and was treated as an illustrious foreigner.

For myself, I know no more pleasant lounge than the public gardens, sheltered as they are by the heights of Darlinghurst from the chill south winds of winter, and in summer shaded from the sun's rays by the trees. Of this latter quality—shade—however, not much can be said. A late traveller in these parts writes, indeed, "Nothing can be more delicious, during the hot days of summer, than to seek the deep shade in the sylvan recesses of these gardens." To *find* it, would be still more delicious. There is, in truth, a great want of the more umbrageous and broad-leafed trees. All the family of the fig, so common here, are excellent in this

respect, and might be more largely introduced into the gardens.

The view of so many vegetable natives of distant regions, within a small space, and all in the open air, is both pleasing and surprising. Plants from the Cape and China, Peru and Japan, Madagascar and North Britain, South America and the Canary Isles, Van Diemen's Land, Hindostan, and New Zealand, are thriving within a stone's throw of each other. The oak and bamboo, the hawthorn and sugar-cane, the Scotch fir, plantain, and mango—the last, however, not looking happy—almost mingle branches.

The Botanic Gardens, then, are I think a very useful establishment—a most creditable effort on the part of a young colony; yet (I note it as a disgraceful fact) in a rabid attack upon the estimates by the opposition members of the Legislative Council, in 1849, this pleasant place of public resort ran imminent risk of being permitted to go to waste for want of the annual vote of money for its support. This was a small instance of radical ebullition and legislative wantonness, such as the intervention of a second Chamber would serve to control.

The drive along the southern shore of the harbour to the Heads or entrance to Port Jackson, and thence back to Sydney by the "old South-Head Road," about thirteen miles, has hardly its equal anywhere for picturesque beauty.

The harbour itself rudely resembles, in its projections and indentations, the form of an oak leaf—or, to enlist a monstrous simile, it may be likened to the gaping mouth

of some huge antediluvian saurian, the bluffs and inlets representing the teeth and the interstices between them. The eye, following the profile of the two opposite shores, cannot but perceive that if the said enormous sandstone jaws were, by some geological miracle, to snap together again, so neat would be the fit that there would remain but little more than a serpentine line of demolished rocks and gum-trees to mark where Port Jackson once was. The trifling islands in its midst would be, as the Yankees say, "chawed up" in a moment—"Cockatoo," and "Goat Island," "Shark," "Sow and Pigs," and even "Pinch-gut," would be masticated and digested at one champ of the mighty monster.

The sins of Sydney, it is to be hoped, will not be visited by so disastrous a closing of her port. If it must happen, may it be when some overwhelming enemy's fleet is sailing up Port Jackson to bombard the city!

The road to the Heads, after passing over the neck of the peninsula on which Darlinghurst is built, dives into a small valley, crossing the head of Rushcutter's Bay; then rising again, and again falling, it traverses a series of these promontories and coves, alike, yet full of variety —the hills well clothed with timber though sandy, the valleys rich in alluvial soil, and covered with wild brush or reeds—or, more usefully, with the crops of the market-gardeners of the town.

The views of the harbour from the higher points of the road, over the tufted tops of the forest sloping down to its extreme brink, and the glimpses of its glittering waters between the boles of the enormous gum-trees, are

truly beautiful. So completely is this great port shut in from the ocean, that I know of no spot a mile within its gates from which the stranger would even surmise the position of its mouth—were it not for the tall bluff of the North Head, which lifts a hundred feet of its sheer wall-like profile above any of the interior headlands. I cannot describe botanically the trees, plants, and shrubs among which the eye of the rider wanders, well pleased, on either side of the road. The Eucalyptus, and other gums of infinite variety, form the larger growth of "the bush." But there are trees, distantly resembling in aspect the European ash, the holly, larch, and myrtle, with a luxuriant undergrowth of ferns and lichens, and a multitude of flowering shrubs clad in spring and autumn with blossoms so lovely in form and hue as to justify the name of "Botany," conferred by Dr. Solander as a title of honour on the neighbouring bay.

There is the Correa, with stiff stem and prickly leaves, but with a string of delicate little pendulous flowers, red, orange, and white, something like the fuchsia, but, in my mind, a hundred times more brilliant.

The native Rose, a Boronea, has the colour but no other resemblance to the European queen of flowers. It is one of the few bush-flowers possessing any odour. Wafted on the passing gale, it commends itself pleasantly to the senses; but, strange enough, on closer acquaintance there mingles with the rich perfume an undoubted scent of the fox! a scent which, however creative of rapture in "the field," is ill adapted to the boudoir. The native rose is, I believe, nearly allied to the Diosma of the European greenhouse, to the scent of which some

noses have strong objection. A bouquet of bush-flowers is highly ornamental in the *épergne* of the dinner table, for they do not soon fade, and keep better out of water than in it; but he who would not implant a thorn in the bosom of beauty will never desire to see them worn in the ball-room, for, with scarcely an exception, they are harsh and thorny as the holly itself.

The South Sea myrtle, or Leptospernum, grows in fine round bushes, spangled with white stars. Of the heath-like Epacris there is an infinite variety, among which I name the Styphelia because it possesses the rare quality of a green flower. The Boronias shoot up their slender stems, among the roughest rocks and stubbornest plants, towards the sun, their wax-like petals showing every delicate shade between deep pink and snowy white.

All these shrubs are evergreen. Amongst their branches and those of the higher trees the most beautiful creepers wreathe themselves. The Kennedya, with a purple vetch-like blossom, is among the most graceful. There is also a white variety, whose flower is so small, that a microscope is necessary to examine its minute beauties.

I must not forget the Bottle-brush, one of the most characteristic plants of the bush. It has rough, twisted branches, and a leaf something like the holly. Sir Joseph Banks gave it the botanical name of Banksia, and his butler, perhaps, bestowed on it the vulgar appellation by which it is generally known. The upright, conical flowers with which this eccentric looking shrub is thickly covered resemble pretty closely that useful implement of the pantry. When at its prime, the deep orange hue of

the flower makes it almost handsome. In winter, the dry, brown hairy cones still sticking to the plant, look exactly like a troop of small monkeys squatting among the branches. In the swamps is a smaller and prettier kind of Banksia, of a softer fabric and with a flower of rich crimson. I used to fancy that my favourite charger loved to wear one of these brilliant natural rosettes in his headstall.

There are several pretty iris-like bulbs in the moister soil; and in the low lands of the Botany Scrub I noticed a crimson and orange flower, like the foxglove in form, very handsome, but so hard and horny in texture that the blossoms actually ring with a clear metallic sound as you shake them It might be the fairies' dinner-bell, calling them to their dew and ambrosia! Alas! there are no "good people" in Australia; no one ever heard of a ghost, or a bogle, or a fetch here! All is too absolutely material to afford a niche for imagination or superstition!

Perhaps the greatest ornament of the bush, however, is the Acacia, of which there are many varieties. In autumn the trees look as if a golden snow-storm had fallen on their branches, bending down with their burden of blossom towards the earth; which is thickly strewn with the yellow bloom. Some of the acacias possess a delicious, almond-like perfume. The bark is extensively used for tanning.

As the flowers of Australia are generally beautiful, but scentless, so are the birds for the most part as gorgeous in plumage as they are harsh in song. Indeed, they have no sustained melody, although isolated notes of

great sweetness do occasionally break the silence of the bush.

After reaching the lighthouse and signal-post situated on the loftiest spot of the South Head, the line of road, —now called the old one,—returns to the city across a tract of a wilder and more sterile character, its general direction being parallel to the coast of the Pacific, of which a wide prospect is enjoyed at various points. Since the establishment of toll-bars, about which everybody of course grumbled for a time, the road is available for all classes of vehicles,—an advantage, as I have said, not half appreciated by the Sydney citizens

On Sundays, indeed, there is a general rush of horsemen and chaise-men and women towards the Heads,—the Christian part of the community because it is their sabbath and holiday, the Hebrews because they make it the latter. A well-known tavern near the lighthouse, however, seems to be the chief attraction; and the wholesome salt breezes of the ocean are so modified with cigar smoke, that this weekly airing can but little profit the Sunday jaunter.

If I have a hundred times taken the ride above described without meeting a single soul of the 50,000 sweltering in the city and suburbs, I may say the same with regard to the ride to Botany Bay. There are two good hotels on the north shore of this basin, called after Sir J. Banks and Captain Cook; and the point on which La Perouse's monument stands may be nine miles from Sydney. To the former there is a pretty good turnpike road, besides innumerable tracks for equestrians across the stunted scrub-land. To the latter there is nothing

that can be called a wheel-road, but a sandy galloping ground for horsemen soft as the riding-school tan.

It must be the pure love of fresh air and exercise that tempts the rider in this direction. Barren, hopeless, unblessed tract; scrubby, rocky, sandy, and boggy by turns; except in the short season of the bush flowers, one would suppose that it had been named "Botany" in bitter irony Unlucky name! retained, to the discredit of the whole colony, by reason of its associations in the popular mind! I cannot but agree with Dr. Lang, that Banksland, or any other title, ought to have been substituted for its original one. The shores of this fine inlet are still as unpopulated as if it were a thousand miles from the city. Perhaps gentlemen selecting a place of residence may feel a squeamish dislike to have their letters addressed to Botany Bay! By direct and legitimate inheritance "Tyburn Terrace" ought to have been the designation of the present Hyde Park Gardens in London, yet it was not adopted by the architect, who was probably fastidious in nomenclature!

The sterile desert lying between the bay and Sydney contains, nevertheless, the greatest treasure—the life-blood, it may be called,—of the metropolis. Without a fresh water river; built on a rock unfavourable to well-digging; without tanks to catch the unfrequent rain, Sydney would die of thirst, and die unwashed, if it were not for the Lachlan Swamp.

This is a huge sponge, lying in the midst of the sand-desert, and discharging itself lazily into Botany Bay. A tunnel about two miles long has been cleverly constructed to convey the precious element to the town,

where it is placed for distribution in the hands of the Corporation, who are permitted to remunerate themselves by a rate upon householders, amounting, I think, to about £2,000 a-year.

At several periods, but particularly in 1849, a panic arose, and was stimulated by the public press, on the subject of the supply of water. The sponge was in danger, indeed showed strong symptoms, of being squeezed dry. In 1850, and not before, it occurred to the authorities to fence in the swamp, in order to prevent the cattle from trampling out its valuable juice; to dig conduits from the surrounding hills; and to dam up its egress. Engineers were moreover consulted as to the practicability and expediency of constructing a canal from the Nepean river, thirty-five miles distant,—a plan which must some day be carried out. An Artesian well was commenced within the walls of the Darlinghurst gaol by the prisoners; and in about three years the result—water or no water at the depth of as many hundred feet—will be reported to the poor thirsty foxes looking on round this long-necked vase.

From some of the more elevated points of the country through which the South Head road is conducted, the views of the harbour are truly splendid. It was from one of them during an afternoon ride,—unpleasant but picturesque incident!—that I saw town and country for the first time under the influence of a Brickfielder. There had been a morning of terrible heat; the sky was free of clouds, yet not bright; a hot wind had raised the thermometer to 102° in the shade. Towards the afternoon the wind fell, a sullen and sultry calm

came on; and ordering my horse, I cantered towards the Heads, to meet a breath of air from the ocean, if breath might be had. Turning my eyes casually towards the town, I was astonished to find that it had disappeared. It had been swallowed up in clouds and columns of red and white dust, which, rising madly on the winds and sweeping across the harbour, gradually veiled from my sight also the pretty suburb of St. Leonard's on the North Shore.

Around my station—about five miles from Sydney—the trees and shrubs even to the minutest spray were motionless, and a little bay below me was unruffled as a mirror; yet I distinctly heard the fierce roaring of the tempest as it rushed through the city and the country beyond it, lashing the upper portion of the harbour into white foam. The boats were flying for shelter in all directions, and one, with calm-weather canvass spread, heeled over, filled and vanished! Soon the line of road from Sydney towards my post, hitherto hidden by the bordering bush, became visible in all its curvatures by thick coils of dust; the tall still trees bowed their heads, and the expanse of bush before and below me seemed to put itself in motion and to rush towards the hill whereon I stood.

Then a torrid gust, like the blast of a furnace, caught my face almost stopping my respiration; and the dust which had ridden on the wings of the wind for so many miles came flying into my eyes and grated in my teeth. In a few moments there was once more a perfect calm.

During the progress of the dust-storm a black battalion of clouds had been rapidly collecting on the

southern horizon. Rolling and coiling about in confused masses, with mutterings of thunder and half-smothered flashes of lightning, their intention and direction were soon developed. Torrents of heavy rain and hail, accompanied by a chilling tornado that well-nigh cut me in two, came drifting horizontally over the face of the country, whilst an ebon mass of vapour right over head poured a perpendicular flood full upon my crown. The lightning became fearful in its vividness and apparent proximity; the thunder, stunning in its magnificent diapason, reverberated from the bluffs around.

Joining in the general uproar, the surf on the north shore flung itself madly up the steep cliffs to their very summits, seemed to stand suspended in the air for a space, and recoiled slowly and unwillingly to its wonted level.

This was "all very fine" certainly, but so unsuited to a "patent ventilating gossamer hat" and a filmy paletôt by Nicol, as to drive me at length to a temporary shelter. The thunder-storm, satiated with an incursion round every point of the compass, rolled away sullenly in the distance. Its rear-guard of light cumulus closed up to the main body, and disappeared at length in the north-east, leaving only one heavy stationary mass—a sort of army of occupation—just above the setting sun, which, shooting its last rays from a bright stripe of sky over the distant Blue Mountains, and behind the long ridge where Sydney stands, showed the mere *silhouette* of a city—the council chamber, the infirmary, the staff offices, the spire of St. James', the barracks, and the gaol—in strong hard relief upon the rose-coloured haze.

The valleys across which I rode on my way home, and the deeper ravines, were already in darkness, while the slanting sunbeams still gilded the hill tops, the great white boles of the gum-trees, and the wet shining faces of the rocks.

Such is a slight sketch of a Sydney hot-wind, and its constant follower the Brickfielder, or, as the Port Jackson boatmen call it, the Sútherly Búster! No words can do justice to the degree of discomfort inflicted by the first upon the Sydney citizens during the season of its prevalence. Luckily the rush of wind from the colder regions, displacing the more rarified air of the preceding "hot-wind," brings back a respirable atmosphere to the gasping inhabitants, while the floods of rain carry away all accumulated impurities.

On the occasion I have just recounted the thermometer fell at once from 102° to 53°. When I started on my ride the lee side of an Indian tattee would have been luxury itself. Two hours later I was well pleased to "take an air," as the Irish say, of the kitchen fire. Subsequently, however, I witnessed instances of a much greater variation of the glass. One morning, while the hot-winds were raging in Sydney, I walked to the Australian Library, facing with some difficulty the scorching gale. Seating myself in the large room to read, I was soon seized with a chill shivering, and, looking at the thermometer within the apartment, was surprised to find it as high as 81°. The instrument outside the window in the shade stood however at 110°. Thus the sudden change of temperature from a superlative degree of heat to a merely positive one, gave me as decided a case of

catarrh as I ever got by a plunge from the hot-aired club-rooms of London to the frosty streets, or, *vice versâ*, from the cold streets to the hot rooms—which experience tells me is the more perilous traject,—fatal, as I verily believe, every winter, to various aged and middle-aged members, who would have lived twenty years longer but for mossy carpets and flues—flues whose uniformly diffused warmth they daily enjoy in those bachelor palaces, but which are seldom to be found in their private homes.

In October 1848, as I find by my diary, I witnessed a fine instance of a nocturnal Brickfielder. Awakened by the roaring of the wind I arose and looked out. It was bright moonlight, or it would have been bright but for the clouds of dust which, impelled by a perfect hurricane, curled up from the earth, and absolutely muffled the fair face of the planet. Pulverised specimens of every kind and colour of soil within two miles of Sydney, flew past the house high over the chimney-tops in lurid whirlwinds, now white, now red. It had all the appearance of an American prairie fire—"barring" the fire. Had the "wild huntsman" and his skeleton field and pack galloped past along with this fierce commixture of earth and air, I should have taken the apparition as a matter of course! It was really terrible to behold—diabolical—indescribable; so I leave it to be imagined by those who saw not nor felt the phenomenon.

One of the greatest miseries of the Southerly Burster is, that (welcome to all animated nature as are its cooling airs,) its first symptoms are the signal for a general rush of housemaids to shut hermetically every aperture

of the dwelling. The thermometer in the drawing-room, and one's own melting mood announce some 86° of heat; while the gale, driving so refreshingly past your windows, is probably 30° lower; but if you have any regard for sight and respiration, for carpets, chintzes, books, and other furniture, you must religiously shut up shop until the "chartered libertine," having scavenged the streets of every particle of dust, has moderated its wrath. Even then, however well fitted may be the doors and windows, the volatile atoms will find their way everywhere, to the utter disturbance of household and personal comfort.

Hot winds and sand-storms, sirocs and simoons, are common to many countries; in the deserts of Africa they are, as we know, a deadly visitation. In New South Wales these storms sometimes cause the eye-blight or sand-blight as the malady is indifferently called, than which, as experience taught me, nothing can well be more painful and irksome, involving actual loss of vision while inflammation is at its height—a loss sometimes, though rarely, as permanent as that occasioned by the Egyptian ophthalmia.

One can hardly fancy a staff-officer carrying orders being foiled in his mission by a heavy fire of dust. The following instance is, however, a fact: One day, having business at the barracks, I mounted my horse, and sallied forth right in the wind's eye. I do not easily give up a point; but, at a certain turn in the road, so galling and incessant were the volleys of miniature brickbats, triturated blue-bottles, and gravel—for all the finer particles had been blown away long before—that my

charger, who never winked at a *feu-de-joie*, and who rested his nose upon the bass drum on his first acquaintance with that tolerably strenuous instrument, positively refused to advance. Baffled by my rebellious steed, and riddled by the stony storm, after some resistance, I was driven in confusion from the field.

Considering the unrivalled suitability of Port Jackson for aquatic pursuits, the citizens of Sydney appreciate pastimes on the water little more than they do the rides, and drives, and gardens. There is, however, connected with the shores, and islets, and coves of the harbour, one pursuit peculiarly congenial to the tastes of the people—a pastime half jaunting, half sedentary; a little sea air, a very little personal exertion, and a large amount of gastronomic recreation; I mean, oyster-eating. Every inch of rock from Sydney to the Heads is thickly colonized by these delicate shellfish; that is, every inch would be so peopled, but for the active extermination incessantly going on. On any fine day select parties of pleasure-and-oyster-seekers may be seen proceeding by water or land, furnished with the necessary muniments for an attack, or actively engaged in it. A hammer and a chisel, an oyster-knife, a bottle of vinegar, and the pepper-pot, with a vigorous appetite, sharpened by the almost impregnable character of the foe—such are the forces brought into the field, and the inducements to distinction. It is needless to add, that the garrison are quickly shelled out of their natural stronghold.

I enrolled myself more than once in an expedition of this kind, and only regretted that "my great revenge

had stomach" for only one-half of the luscious victims demolished by my companions. The small rock-oyster of New South Wales is excellent in its way, although inferior to the Carlingford. The great mud-oyster of the rivers is too unctious for delicate appetites, although it is swallowed *ore rotundo* at the street-corners and stalls by those who prefer quantity to quality. Not much can be said in favour of the other fish of the colony. The guard-fish, which resembles a little sword-fish and is somewhat smaller than the European herring, is delicate; and the schnapper, when on the table, looms like the cod, but is a decided impostor as far as flavour goes. There is an inland, tramontane, fresh-water cod, strange to say, worth all the sea-fish of the Australian coasts. I am afraid to state the weight that this species sometimes attains, but in naming 60 lbs. I am surely within the mark.

There did exist, during part of my sojourn in Australia, and long previously perhaps, an association of the aristocracy and bureaucracy of Sydney, whose members once or twice a month indulged in piscatory excursions down the harbour. It was generally believed that they went out with the intention and purpose of "roughing it" on the fruits of their skill. Furnished with an immense seine, or hauling-net, they put into any of the numerous sandy coves of Port Jackson favourable for the purpose of the expedition; and having launched their net and lighted a fire of drift-wood under some sheltering bank tufted with gum or fig-trees, nothing could have appeared to the eyes of a stranger more

miraculous than the repast which resulted from the experiment. The gentlemen did not over-fatigue themselves by personal exertion, for half-a-dozen boatmen, who looked wonderfully like convicts, hauled the seine, while one or two others, assisted perhaps by an amateur, busied themselves among pots and pans round the fire. Presto! appear spread on the sward a boiled schnapper or broiled flathead, with oyster sauce. That was natural enough; it looked like practising Ichthyophagy in its purest sense—as it is practised, in short, at Blackwall or Greenwich in the whitebait season. But pigeon pies, turkey and tongues, ham and chicken, champagne and bottled ale—where did they come from? It was quite plain that all was fish that came to the net of these famous fishermen.

The sports of the day always afforded a subject of talk and laughter for the next forty-eight hours. It was pleasant while it lasted. Pity that an end, and a somewhat tragical end, suddenly came to it! One fine evening, returning from a successful excursion, the Club found themselves becalmed far from land, in the beautiful little topsail schooner which sometimes carried them on these fishing trips. As the practice of personal mortification was discountenanced by the laws, or habits, of the society, the members quitted the vessel and gained the shore in a rowing boat, leaving her in charge of three hands. Whether or not these poor fellows got at the drinkables—supposing any remained—it is hard to determine; but one of the southerly bursters above described swept suddenly down upon the smooth bay and the unprepared schooner,

and the little vessel went at once to the bottom, when all on board were lost.

I know no spot in the world better formed for picnic parties than Port Jackson. When any of Her Majesty's ships happen to be in harbour, these excursions are tolerably frequent.

The navy ought to feel flattered by the manner in which they are always received by the Sydneyites. The appearance of a man-of-war in the cove is the signal for all sorts of gaiety and hospitality. It is indeed pleasant to see the vigour which, fresh from the sea and exclusively virile society, the members of our sister profession throw into their enjoyment of shore-going amusements. Their life and spirit infuse, as it were, salt and pepper into the insipid materials of a society rendered dull by monotony of life and absence of incident. No wonder their advent is hailed with rapture by the fair!

Having stumbled upon the word society, let me devote a few remarks to that of the New South Wales capital. It is too late to apologise for digressions in this work. My object is to produce a tolerably accurate general picture taken from nature. I am compelled therefore to sketch each object as it passes under my eye—to the destruction, perhaps, of any unity of plan or execution.

CHAPTER III.

SYDNEY SOCIETY—THE "FREE" AND THE "FREED"—EMANCIPISTS AND EXPIREES—RICH ONES—REFORMED FELONS—INSOLVENCY—A HERALD-OFFICE FOR EX-CONVICTS—TRANSPORTATION—COCKATOO ISLAND.

THAT the society of Sydney is cut up into parties and cliques, the frontiers of which are not the less arbitrary because they are not very apparent, is a truism which applies quite as justly to any other community without an hereditary aristocracy; I shall say no more therefore on that head. The remark is not more applicable to Sydney than to Liverpool, New York, Montreal, Calcutta, and by this time, I dare say, to the capital of the Auckland Islands, whatever its name may be.

There is one grand feature of the social status of Sydney, however, which is almost exclusively peculiar to itself—I mean the convict infusion.

A person newly arrived here feels no little curiosity, perhaps some little uneasiness, on the subject of the degree of influence exerted on the social system by the numerous body of affluent emancipists, which the lapse of time and their own amended characters have formed in the community. It seems almost incredible that, living in the very midst of this community—in many

cases in equal and even superior style to what may be called the aristocracy—possessing some of the handsomest residences in the city and suburbs—warehouses, counting houses, banking establishments, shipping, immense tracts of land, flocks and herds, enjoying all the political and material immunities in common with those possessing equal fortunes, of the more reputable classes—they are, nevertheless a class apart from the untainted. There is a line of moral demarcation by them peremptorily impassable. The impudent and pushing, and these are few, are repelled. The unobtrusive and retiring are not encouraged. Their place on the social scale is assigned and circumscribed. They have, humanly speaking, expiated their crime; whatever these may have been, the nature of them has, probably, never passed beyond the records of the Superintendent's office. They belong indeed to the common flock; but they are the black sheep of it. They are treated with humanity and consideration, but in a certain degree they are compelled to herd together. The merchants and men of business generally meet them on equal terms in the negotiation of affairs in which their wealth, intelligence, and commercial weight sometimes necessarily involve them. They do not presume on this partial admission to equality, but fall back into their prescribed position when the business which has called the two orders into temporary contact has been completed. Official juxtaposition does not bring with it any plea for social intimacy.

The strong common sense and right feeling of our fellow-countrymen seem to have, at once and without

hesitation, adjusted this difficult domestic question—quietly, firmly and irrevocably; no cruelty or undue assumption of superiority on the one part, no fruitless resistance on the other. The barrier is complete.

The "conditional" or "free" pardon of their sovereign appears to entitle this unfortunate section of society to traffic on equal terms with their fellow-man, but yields them no licence to pass from the counting-house to the parlour.

As I write this there passes my window a well-known individual of this class in a smart new barouche, with a showy pair of horses caparisoned in plated harness, and a coachman and page in livery and laced hats.

If the spectacle of a wealthy ex-convict rolling by in his handsome equipage, grates unpleasantly on the feelings of those who are blessed with competence, how galling must it be for the good man suffering poverty and struggling for a precarious subsistence for himself and his family!—and yet this is a thing of every day occurrence in Sydney. The indigent and honest man has literally to "eat the dirt" thrown from the chariot wheels of the branded felon.

If the fortunes of all these persons had been made since the termination of their bondage, the contrast between their success and the penury of the more deserving would not, perhaps, appear so repugnant to poetical justice and the divine right of honesty. But the contrary is, almost without exception, the fact. The wealth of the majority of the "Old Hands" was accumulated in different manners, but chiefly by monopolies during the period of their punishment—or rather of their

banishment, for of course it is only whilst in the comparative freedom afforded by the "Ticket-of-Leave," or "Assignment" to private service—indulgences earned by good conduct under probation—that opportunities for acquiring property were open to them.

No man, perhaps, can better appreciate the value of uprightness of character than he whose person has suffered deeply by a lapse from it. It is possible that reformation may as often result from policy and expediency as from a heartfelt conviction of the sinfulness of sin; but certain it is that in many instances as much industry and probity have been exercised by persons who have been prisoners of the Crown, as by any order of men labouring for wealth in the colony. When such amendment becomes apparent, a charitable spirit is, as I have said, universally evinced towards the individual; and, whatever mortification he may occasionally receive by chance shots, no intentional or deliberate reproach on the subject of "old stories" is ever aimed at him by his fellow-men. Indeed, the forbearance practised on this point amounts even to delicacy. A convict, *eo nomine*, is seldom mentioned in New South Wales. He is "a prisoner of the Crown," an "old hand," a "government man," or, he was "sent out." This tenderness of expression, it will readily be believed, is practised not so much for the benefit of the actual offenders as for that of their innocent descendants,—sufferers for the sins of their fathers, moral bastards, whose position is certainly deserving of all consideration from those more happily born. "In all mixed society," says Bulwer, "certain topics are proscribed." It is

needless to particularize the forbidden topics of New South Wales general society.

The great preponderance of "conditional" over "free" pardons tends to perpetuate the stigma: for although, sometimes, the conditions go no further than to prohibit return to the United Kingdom, others are more stringent in their provisos; and the opulent family, who in some distant community might hide their single blemish and display a hundred counterbalancing virtues, are constrained to remain in the country where their disgrace is patent, until the brand wears out through the lapse of time.

Among the many emancipated prisoners whose circumstances enable them to live on terms of financial equality with the more wealthy of the free classes, as well as among the store and shopkeepers of the same order with whom I have come in contact, I must say that I have never witnessed any instance of prominently offensive conduct, except in the case of one notorious individual, who, alone among an ostracised class, seems to defy public opinion, and to push his vulgar assumption of importance into public notice. I will assist him in his object by giving here a slight sketch of his biography.

This very "swell" member of the swell mob was transported for robbing his Majesty's mail of a large sum of money; but, before his apprehension, he found means to transfer the cash to his wife. She followed him to Sydney under a feigned name. And here arose one of the most glaring instances of the abuse of the system of the "assignment" of convicts ever known.

He was assigned as a government servant to his faithful partner! It is not my object to follow the upward progress of this worthy couple; but opulence they, and freedom he, at length obtained. I do not vouch for the fact, but I have heard that since his manumission he visited England, drove a dashing four-in-hand phaeton in the parks, and contrived even to give personal offence to the most exalted personage of the realm in one of the royal demesnes.

Of this I know nothing beyond report; but I have often noted with disgust this man's shameless love of notoriety. Cock of the walk in gambling-houses, prize fights, publican's races, &c. &c., it seemed to be his ambition to attract the attention and offend the prejudices of the higher and more respectable classes in public places, where of course he had freedom of entry. Robber, bully, and blackleg, he still continued to maintain an unabashed front—such is the power of money and impudence. Yet this person is not a drunkard, dresses well, has a good house and handsome equipage; moreover, he has brought up his children carefully and creditably, and has married them respectably.

The assignment of a husband to the service of his wife, placed them in a singular and awkward mutual relation. If he offended, she, by application to the nearest magistrate, could have him well flogged; and, for a more serious act of insubordination, sent to work in chains on the roads!

I have never had, never desired access to the records of the Convict Department; but, for the lovers of Newgate-Calendar marvels, there are to be found there, it is said, mines of rich materials which might be worked

with great effect,—and with profit,—by the romancer. But such cases as the following, of convicts' attainment of wealth and consequent power and station, are constantly before one's eyes in Sydney.

The first is a rich capitalist, and a landowner to the extent of a principality. He was a smuggler, a "fence,"* aided in the escape of French prisoners during the war; made some money in these pursuits, and was "transported beyond the seas." His money, following him, quickly accumulated, as it always did in the good days of the colony. He is not respected, but he has a good head for business and plenty of money, and commands therefore a place in a commercial community.

Another case.—A Jew, professing a desire for conversion to Christianity, gains access to the plate-chest, &c. of a proselytizing family. The plate is indeed quickly converted——into cash. He desired no better than a trip to Australia. He is carried there at the expense of the taxpayers of England; dies in the odour of sanctity; and his next descendant attains high civic honours, becomes a justice of the peace, and no doubt well merits his success.

One day, whilst riding with the Governor, I drew his attention to a carriage of peculiar form and colour, evidently an exact copy of one brought by his Excellency from England. His Excellency, although not easily moved, appeared far from flattered at finding that for the future he must be content to share the peculiarity of his equipage with emancipist Mr. ——. There were

* Receiver of stolen goods.

the graceful bends of the vice-regal phaëton, even the very shade of the aristocratic yellow closely imitated. There was a crest, coat of arms, &c. &c.; and, for aught I know to the contrary, the worthy proprietor may have adopted, in profound ignorance of its import, the bar sinister of royal descent, borne on the shield of the ducal family whose scion now rules the colony. The same armorial bearings, I understand, are blazoned on the wire window-blinds of this ambitious gentleman's residence. I am glad to add that he has the character of a good man and a charitable, and has given land and money for the building of a church.

I was expressing to an old colonist one day my surprise that a notorious ex-convict, now however a tradesman in affluent circumstances, should often be accompanied in his carriage by a respectable looking gentleman, who I knew came a free man to the colony. "He is the worse of the two, ten times over," replied my companion. "The other was indeed a prisoner of the crown, but acquired his property by steady industry. This person, although a free man, had no qualm about becoming the partner of the rich criminal. They failed for a large sum; gave thousands of pounds for houses and lands, while paying twopence-halfpenny in the pound to their creditors, and are both now more wealthy than ever."

The career, from a state of pauper crime to wealth and independence, of an emancipated prisoner, is, in a few words, as follows:—

He offends against his country's laws, is "sent out," is assigned to service, gets his ticket-of-leave, finally his

conditional or free pardon; or becomes free by servitude of his sentence. He takes a public house, dabbling meanwhile in various other money-making pursuits. He buys up cattle when the market is down, when their value might be reckoned by shillings, and sells them when ten or twelve pounds may be their price. He lends money on good security, and at usurious interest. He builds, buys, and sells houses. In the height of his prosperity, his house-rental alone brings him in 120*l.* a-week; for, liking quick returns, he counts his income hebdomadally. He purchases shares in a great banking establishment, well known although not openly designated as the Emancipists' Bank, a most safe and respectable house, (the writer banked there himself.) He possesses huge storehouses in the city, a beautiful villa in a fashionable suburb. "Gorgeous is the only term I can apply to his furniture," remarked to me one day a high functionary who had rented the house of an "old hand" for a period, but whom the wealthy owner had turned out at the close of the lease. He drives a splendid equipage, flashing with silver harness and new varnished panels, and a fast trotting pair of bays, with which he takes pleasure in passing and dusting the government officers and other less opulent respectables on their way to church. The above is no fanciful portrait. It is from nature.

In one of my journeys in the interior of the colony, I inquired of my companion the history of a beautiful place about half a mile from the road-side. The moment he told me the name of the proprietor, I recognised it as one inscribed a hundred times over in the charts of New

South Wales (and New Zealand, if I mistake not) as a possessor of allotments. Transported as a lad, he served apprentice to a bricklayer, who employed a number of other prisoners. The sober and penniless boy saved up his daily ration of rum, then a scarce article in the colony, and, selling it to the other prisoners, laid the foundation of a fortune which enabled him a few years subsequently to eclipse the richest merchants of Sydney. Yet, when possessed of wealth sufficient for every luxury, he never indulged in personal expenses. Living on "damper,"* beef, and ration tea, in a brick-floored room, his highest luxury was getting drunk on East India rum at home, or at the neighbouring road-side tavern on colonial beer. He always, however, had an acute head and a vigilant eye for business; and mercantile, pastoral, and agricultural affairs flourished under his management.

Exactly opposite, across the public road, lies the property of a gentleman of high station and character, whose avocations compel him to reside in the capital. He must keep up a degree of style, and exercise a degree of hospitality, commensurate with his position. His distant estate is neglected or mismanaged. At present a few horses and horned stock run wild and almost unreclaimed on the still uncleared land; the fences have fallen into disrepair; the property is a loss rather than a gain to the owner. The "old hand" is making money, in short; the old soldier spending it. The one is debarred society and its incidental expenses; the other is compelled by his duties to society to live expensively.

* Unleavened bread.

In 1849 or 1850, a friend of mine, desirous of returning permanently to England, and of parting with his property in the colony, advertised it for sale in the public prints,—an excellent country squire's house and offices, with a beautiful farm around it, close to a large town. Considering the depreciation of landed property, many tolerably handsome offers were made; but the highest bidder and eventual purchaser was a man who had been a convict, one of about a hundred prisoners employed by the father of the heiress of the estate. By steady behaviour this person became the overseer of the assigned men, gradually acquired money, freedom, and independence; and, still in the vigour of life, purchases the house and property of his late master as a dower for his only daughter. However completely reformed, however respectable in life and character, he cannot be a very agreeable neighbour for the numerous branches of the clan * * * still resident in the country, amongst whom he has thus settled himself.

I could enumerate not a few similar instances of convict prosperity. Some rose to wealth by honest industry, some by industry unfettered by probity, and others by downright roguery, defrauding their creditors by dint of the Insolvent Court, after having made over the bulk of their property to their wives or other trusty relatives. Those unfortunates whom they had cozened were compelled, and still continue, to go a-foot, while successful and brazen-faced rascality "rides in coaches." In mentioning the Insolvent Court, it is only fair to say that enriched convicts were by no means the only class of persons who fled to that city of refuge.

Some eight or ten years back, intoxicated with previous success, (a success so unprecedented as to be in itself a warning to the wise,) the highest as well as the lowest of the colonists had launched forth into every species of extravagance and wild speculation; a state of affairs which the convict system, with its cheap labour and enormous government expenditure, served to feed and encourage. In the heyday of this success, the sudden demolition of the system and its material advantages, together with the fall in price of the staple exports of the colony, swooped with all the fierce violence of the monsoon upon the swelling sails of the thoughtless community. Some foundered at once, to rise no more: others, driven on a lee shore, fell into the hands of wreckers; while a few, with damaged rigging, split canvas, and crazy hulls, managed to continue their voyage in sorry plight, but hoping for brighter skies and fairer gales.

Mischance fell alike on the bad and on the good. "Out of the every twelve men of fortune and position, at that time in the colony,"—said an eloquent member of the Legislative Council, in sketching the past history of New South Wales,—"at least seven or eight had sunk into the grave, overwhelmed with the difficulties that had rolled upon them, or had evaded destruction only in the sanctuary of the Insolvent Court."

Out of this sanctuary, some of the refugees issued most shabbily—a thing not quite peculiar to New South Wales! But, for the honour of human nature in general, and this colony in particular, there were a few who bared their own breasts to the brunt of misfortune, instead of directing it upon the heads of others.

I will adduce one satisfactory instance in connexion with the subject of wealthy emancipated prisoners of the crown.

—— —— was not only transported for a heinous offence, but, while under probation, had the character of the most unruly and incorrigible of the chain-gang he belonged to. Every kind of severity and indignity was heaped upon his obdurate spirit. He was sent to join a distant lime-burning gang, where he was both worked and thrashed like a donkey, for his back was scored with frequent and severe applications of the "cat." He was whipped at the cart's tail through the streets of Sydney. Cockatoo Island, the convict black-hole of New South Wales, was only too good for him, and he was drafted as irreclaimable to that Pandemonium of the Pacific, Norfolk Island.

Yet he reformed — who shall say through what agency? Perhaps the devil was whipped out of him. Perhaps reflection cast the foul fiend out — for the reprobate had a long head on those same fustigated shoulders.

At any rate, in process of time, and by a mixture of good conduct, good luck and address, the branded and scourged felon, the manacled slave, became a wealthy capitalist.

At the time of the general money-quake he fell like the rest—failing for an immense sum; I do not know the amount, but certainly not less than — (probably twice as much as)—50,000*l.* Unlike his compeers in mischance, bond and free, who sheltered themselves in the Court, by a strong effort he succeeded in paying up

twenty shillings in the pound; and, having thus reduced himself almost to beggary, he recommenced life undismayed and with that resolute energy which, ill directed, had formerly made him foremost among the bad.

This man, like some others of his class gave to his children the highest education England could furnish. He is the landlord of many of the aristocracy of Sydney, who find him both liberal and correct in his dealings. The calling he has adopted brings him into contact with persons of every grade. He is extensively employed by the Government, as well as by companies and individuals, and has always been cited as a punctual, respectable, and upright man of business—as well as a singularly clever one, although, even in his old age, he can scarcely write his name.

In the only transaction I had in the colony, involving several hundred pounds' worth of property, I deliberately selected this meritorious person from among several of the same profession possessing the highest qualifications of character and capacity.

Since I made the above note, its subject has paid the debt of nature.

In proof of the high estimation in which "the long course of honourable and successful pursuits" of this person was held by the public, a Colonial Journal distinguished by its strict principles, in thus alluding to his career, mentions that the "*cortège*" attending his funeral consisted of nearly a hundred carriages,—perhaps the most numerous procession ever seen in Sydney on similar occasions. The deceased left a large and unencumbered property.

This is a singular anecdote connected with a country where it is not uncommon to meet men, of previously unblemished character, who have dodged through the Insolvent Courts more than once, and are still amongst the wealthiest of the land.

I know nothing of the operations of this lawful loophole for lavish livers and reckless speculators; and I can very well comprehend that little good can come of squeezing the dry sponge, or screwing a pauper—still less from shutting him up between four walls, so as to deprive him of any chance of recovering himself by future exertions; but surely there must be "something rotten," when a rascal, who had ruined a dozen reputable families, is permitted to pass this court (I allude to a special case), although it was proved that a great amount of money and other property had just been removed, with his knowledge, from his residence. But, forsooth, it could not be proved that he was an active agent in its removal.

The most interesting of the class compulsorily expatriated—to use a delicate expression suited to the sex—has been made the heroine of a well-known popular novel in England. This lady has lived a model of virtue and propriety, and her children and grandchildren are well received, and deserve to be so, in the best society of the colony.

I know of but one person, who came out to this country as a prisoner of the crown, admitted, without any reservation, into equal communion with the society in general. Whilst serving in an active profession he had the misfortune, some thirty-five or forty years ago,

to kill a man in a duel, and, falling into the hands of a judge determined to make an example of such a case, was transported for a term of years, or for life, I know not which. Practising with eminent skill as a physician for a longer period than any of the profession in the colony, he signalised himself by his benevolent attentions to the poor and sick. He was a distinguished member of the First Legislative Council of New South Wales—being indeed one of the elected members for the city of Sydney; and, after the dissolution of this body, was a successful candidate for a seat in the second Council, convened in 1849—only resigning this honourable post for private reasons—perhaps on account of his advanced age.

Yet did not this talented and worthy gentleman wholly escape the bitter consequences of his former position. During a debate on the proposed Endowment of a Colonial University—so late as 1849—certain gentlemen were nominated to compose a senate for the management of the institution. Strong exception was taken by an hon. member against one of the gentlemen named, on the principle that a person who had been transported ought not to be eligible for such a post. What respect could the colonists expect from home if they could not elect twelve men free from the taint which had degraded the Colony in the eyes of the world? "It was not against the individual but against the principle he protested." And he wound up his speech by raising "his warning voice against an University Bill which would exclude clergymen and admit convicts."

It is necessary to note here that the mover of the Bill introduced the startling clause that clergymen of all

denominations ought to be excluded from the management of the institution. Not only the manager and trustees were to be laymen, but all the teachers should be laymen. Secular education only was wanted, no sectarian influence could be permitted!

A learned member, replying to the first speaker, would not consent to exclude the gentleman alluded to on the ground that he belonged to a class to which infamy attached. He urged that Dr. —— had sat in the first Legislative Council, and had associated with the highest grades of society; that he had been placed in the position he had formerly occupied, because, being an officer in the navy at a time when it was impossible to avoid giving what was termed gentlemanly satisfaction when it was demanded, he had had the misfortune to kill his antagonist in a duel. The spirit of the times had changed, but formerly some of the most distinguished men had exposed themselves to the risk of similar punishment. He instanced the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Winchelsea, Lord Cardigan, and the duel between the Duke of York and the Duke of Richmond. It was well known that among the professors of Cambridge was one who had been unfortunate enough to kill an opponent in a duel.

The worthy doctor thus unmistakeably pointed at, though not named, finding the cap to fit, put it on. He published an insulting letter to his opponent. The latter took the law instead of personal vengeance, and "the affair came off" in the Supreme Court.

The Solicitor General, for the defendant, said that he had known him many years. He had known him only

to be charitable and good, and always ready to promote the interests of the colony generally.

The Chief Justice said that he was of opinion that Dr. —— had no just cause of complaint. The debate in the Council had turned upon a question of vital importance to the colony and to the proposed University, viz. whether persons who had been transported to the colony were eligible to be on the senate. Dr. ——'s name was not mentioned. It was to be regretted, however, that the word convict was used in the last sentence of Mr. L——'s speech. His Honour added that from the bench he could only recognise Dr. ——, for the purpose of debate, as one of those who came to the colony as a convict. Off the bench he had the highest esteem for him, and for his very good qualities. His subsequent career in the colony entitled him to perfect oblivion and forgiveness of the past.

The judges ultimately "discharged the rule," which, I suppose, means that the case was dismissed without costs.

The merits of the case between the two litigants seemed to rest on the question whether public principle or private pique prompted the objection.

At the period of colonial history when the emancipist class, patronised and drawn from social obscurity by the governor of the day, had attained the highest point of prosperity; when the eminent and opulent firms of Lagg, Scragg, Hempson & Co., and other houses and individuals, possessed branch businesses in London, Liverpool, and in the neighbouring colonies, and owned at least one half of the monied and landed

property in the colony—it is a ludicrous fact that an ingenious individual, in quest of an opening for employment, hit upon the bright idea of establishing an "office of armorial research." He had no difficulty in finding namesakes for most of his Botany Bay constituents among the nobility and landed gentry of England, and in adapting to them suitable coats of arms, heraldic emblems and mottoes. I happen to know that on one occasion this colonial garter-king-at arms having allotted to an ex-convict customer the following imposing motto: — "*Ictus non victus*" — "Stricken not vanquished;"—and having with some complacency submitted it for approval to a gentleman of his acquaintance, the latter, with all due deference to the accomplished herald, proposed this trifling amendment — "*Ictus ter convictus*"—"Scourged, and thrice convicted!"—a legend more veracious than most epitaphs!

One Sunday, in passing through a country town of this colony, and taking my seat amongst others in one of the ordinary pews in the aisle of the parish church, I noticed a large dais-like pew, crimson-curtained and brass rodded, on one side of the altar, with a costly marble tablet attached to the wall. In England it would have been the ancestral seat of the squire and lord of the manor. The person to which this pew belonged occupied precisely this station with regard to the colonial town. So likewise did his father, who had been a convict, and to whose memory that testimonial of filial respect was sacred.

Such are a few instances illustrative of an element of society peculiar to this colony and to one other only.

They are every-day instances continually under the notice of the Sydney public, not now dragged from obscurity in order to adorn a tale. Whether they are calculated to "point a moral" depends much on the way in which they are taken. On the one hand, the spectacle of wealthy crime constantly before the eyes of a young community, in which a modest competence is all that the hard-working and honest man may hope for, cannot but be hurtful as a subject of contemplation, comment, and comparison by the inexperienced and unreflecting. Is it not calculated to make a weak and rash mind doubt the justice not only of fallible man, but of infallible Omniscience? On the other hand it may be argued that an offence is fairly expiated by a commensurate punishment, and that the prosperity of the penitent offender should not only be a subject of rejoicing, but afford a profitable and salutary example.

But there are other questions. Are the great ends—the prevention of crime, and the punishment and reformation of criminals—really attained by the secondary punishment called Transportation? And are the present advantages enjoyed by some whose past career has been stained with recorded wickedness, calculated to inspire the terror that a preventive punishment ought to inspire, or to deter those wavering in their principles, or having none, from following the same courses? True, the hardened reprobate, the twice or thrice-convicted felon, whom severity and indulgence have alike failed to reclaim, will pass his life in little better than slavery,—the chain, the scourge, and compulsory labour his daily fate. But if the most desperate and depraved ruffian

have but the strength and resolution to feign and maintain an orderly, willing, and respectful demeanour, a few years will obtain for him some of the indulgences incident to the system,—his pass to work for hire in the town; his ticket-of-leave, enabling him to compete with the honest labourer in any part of a given district,—his conditional pardon, permitting him to go anywhere but to the United Kingdom or the place from whence he was originally transported; and even his free pardon, by which he is completely reinstated in liberty. And who shall be able to judge, whether this amendment of conduct may have arisen from the promptings of conscience and real moral amelioration, or merely from a keen appreciation of personal ease and material improvement? When the latter is the case, it is a pity that the false hypocrite and the true penitent should be "whitewashed" together.* Still more to be lamented is it, that the virtuous operative of the Old Country is too often ill-fed, ill-lodged, ill-clothed, and at his wits' end to save himself and family from the workhouse; while his fellow-villager, who has been transported for repeated offences, finds himself, after a short probation, allowed to work for his own livelihood, in a cheap country, with a splendid climate, and at a rate of wages unheard of in England.

* The following is a strong instance of an incurable:—

J. B. came out for burglary, in time got a ticket-of-leave, was again convicted of a series of burglaries, and was sent to Norfolk Island. While there, so long as his accomplices supplied him with presents of tea and tobacco, he kept silence, but the supply failing he *split* upon them, and, in reward for turning King's evidence, received a free pardon and 100*l*. While passing through Sydney, on his way to England, however, the ruling passion once more assailed him. He broke into a house, was caught, and convicted; and, in short, here he is still.

The system of transportation will always find plenty of advocates at home; for a public that pays grudgingly and grumblingly for the necessities of its indigent members, will pay willingly enough for the ridding its ranks of rogues. Society is less actively harassed by pauperism than by rascality!

Very many transported persons have thoroughly reformed. Very many were never radically vicious, but owed their fall to bad example and bad counsel. The wheel of fortune (that of Brixton, perhaps!) may have played them an ugly turn or two in the youth of some; but they have seen their errors, felt the consequences of them, and learnt, moreover, the value of character and conduct. But the blemish is irradicable. Like a broken-kneed horse, they may continue to work, and work as well as their more spotless fellow-men; but they never meet again with that implicit trust which those who have never "been down" have a right to expect.

Society, however, must be protected from too close contact with the once-tainted. She protects herself, accordingly, as I have mentioned heretofore; and the social economy of this colony is in general sufficiently secured from what is called the convict influence.

So little is what may be styled active convictism now apparent in Sydney, that a stranger might be unaware that any remains of the system still exist. The prisoners under custody and punishment are all confined to Cockatoo Island. This natural hulk is situated about two miles above Sydney, just where Port Jackson narrows into the creek called the Paramatta River, and about a quarter of a mile from either shore. Here is

all that remains of that stupendous machinery which from first to last has introduced into and diffused through these colonies not less than 60,000* of Great Britain's offenders, and by whose agency it may be said this great fifth portion of the globe has been redeemed from the savage, and appropriated to the European family.

The isle is a triangle in form, about 400 yards long by 280 in width. It contains at present about 300 prisoners under conviction for offences committed in the colony, or expirees from Norfolk Island. Many of these are regular incurables, doubly and trebly convicted. Cockatoo, like the last-named island, may be considered as a college for rogues, of which New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land are merely preparatory schools. The members must have matriculated, graduated, and become professors, in order to be entered on the books. A "little go" in vice will scarcely entitle to residence!

The prisoners are employed in quarrying stone, in laying down a clear and spacious wharf round this rugged isle, so that a few sentries can command the entire circumference. They are moreover engaged on the useful work of excavating a dry dock—a convenience which does not at present exist in these colonies.

The establishment is admirably adapted both by nature and art to its purpose. Nevertheless, many desperate attempts at escape were made in my time.

* Mr. A. Dumas, clerk in the Convict Department, Sydney, states, that of these 60,000 prisoners, "38,000 are now filling respectable positions in life, and earning their livelihood in the most creditable manner. . . . . Of the residue, death and departures from the colony will account for the greater part; and I am enabled to state that only 370 out of the whole are now undergoing punishment of any kind!"—*Letter dated June*, 1850.

One wretched man flung himself into the water, loaded with chains, and, being a powerful swimmer, had got nearly a hundred yards from the pier before the sentry perceived him. Disregarding the soldier's shouts and threats the man swam steadily onwards, upon which the sentry fired, and the wretch instantly sunk; nor was his body ever found. Sharks in search of offal from the slaughter-houses haunt this part of the harbour, and act as an efficient "cordon."

The great curiosity of Cockatoo Island is the Siloes—excavations in the solid rock, shaped like a huge bottle, 15 or 20 feet deep by 10 wide, with a narrow neck, closed by a stone capsule luted with plaster. About a dozen and a half of these siloes, filled in times of plenty with grain, were intended as a reserve of food for seasons of famine, which have more than once befallen the colony. It was a monopoly for the public benefit; but the plan was discountenanced and disallowed by the home authorities—I suppose, because it might interfere with the agricultural interests.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORICAL NOTES—BIRTH AND INFANCY OF BOTANY BAY—A MILITARY REVOLT—EXTRACTS FROM AN OLD REGISTER—FIRST WOOL—POPULATION IN 1833—SALE AND LEASE OF CROWN LANDS—EMIGRATION—PAPAL AGGRESSION—GOLD DISCOVERED—TOUR IN THE INTERIOR—VINEYARD—PARAMATTA—A FEMALE REVOLT—HONEY-MOONS—"OLD IRONBARK"—BUSH TAVERNS—EMU FERRY INN.

I HAD not been many months in the colony before a most favourable opportunity of visiting the provinces occurred. But ere I engage my reader to accompany me on my first inland tour, I would beg permission to do for him what I did for myself on the passage out, and subsequently; namely, to look up from the authorities nearest at hand a few of the leading facts attendant on the history of New South Wales. It is needless to say that he is at liberty to shirk these notes if he pleases, and to jump again into the current of the narrative.

To begin at the very beginning,—it is perhaps not generally known that the great island continent of New Holland, so lately occupied by the Anglo-Saxon family, is senior in existence to Europe itself. The absence of certain strata in its geological formation is sufficient

proof to the learned that the sun rose and set on Australia whilst "Old" England remained yet submerged beneath the waves she now rules.

This subject is so immeasurably beyond my reach, that; in the spirit of the Fox in the fable, pronouncing it "dry," I jump at once out of the scrape, to the year 1609, when the Spaniard, De Quiros, is supposed to have been the first white visitor of the Great South Land. One Dirk Hartog, (the ancestor, no doubt, of Sir Walter Scott's hero,) of Amsterdam, was the second.

In 1644, the Dutch navigator, Abel Tasman, explored its coast, and bestowed upon it, very naturally and patriotically, the name of Niew Hollandt.

In 1777, the Welshman, Cook, in planting the British standard on its shores, with equal propriety styled it New South Wales.

Both titles are retained; the former being the generic appellation of the entire island, the latter that of the first colony implanted on its coasts. Australia is a more sonorous *alias* by which this great southern slice of the globe has also become known; and the term Australasia has been given (as some one remarks, "with doubtful propriety") to all the comparatively lately discovered lands in the South Pacific Ocean, New Holland, New Zealand, &c. &c.

The British colonies in New Holland may be said to owe their origin to the United States of America; for, on the severance of these last from the Mother Country, she was compelled to look out for some other corner in which to put her naughty boys—some other place for her

deported criminals. Botany Bay, so lauded by Dr. Solander, Cook's companion, was fixed on.

"The main objects," writes Dr. Lang, "of the British Government in the formation of the proposed settlement, were, 1st. To rid the Mother country of the *intolerable nuisance arising from the daily increasing* accumulation of criminals in her jails and houses of correction;—2d. To afford a suitable place for the safe custody and the punishment of these criminals, as well as for their ultimate progressive reformation;—and, 3d. To form a British colony out of those materials which the reformation of the criminals might gradually supply to the Government, in addition to the families of free emigrants who might from time to time be induced to settle in the newly-discovered territory."

In March 1787, accordingly, the "first fleet," eleven vessels, under command of Captain Phillip, R.N. of H. M. ship *Sirius*, with 565 males, and 192 females, and a guard of marines—in all, 1,030 souls on board—sailed from England. After eight months' passage, they reached in safety Botany Bay. This spot was found sandy, swampy, and ill watered; the harbour shallow and exposed; the natives hostile. Phillip, searching further northwards, entered an inlet about ten miles from Botany Bay, laid down in the chart of Cook's expedition as a "boat-harbour," under the name of Port Jackson, from the sailor who discovered its entrance.

The great circumnavigator thus slightingly notices this splendid estuary:—"At daybreak, on Sunday, the 6th May, 1770, we set sail from Botany Bay, with a light

breeze, &c. &c., and at noon our observation was 30° 50′ S. At this time we were between two and three miles distant from the land, and abreast of a bay, or harbour, in which there appeared to be a good anchorage, and which I called Port Jackson."

Astonished and overjoyed at the view of the magnificent haven, which had been veiled from the sea by the outer headlands, Phillip hastened to remove the fleet from Botany Bay, and on the 26th January, 1788, it was anchored in Sydney Cove. On that day the epoch of transportation to New South Wales commenced; it terminated on the 20th August, 1840. This punishment is now confined to Van Diemen's Land, and its dependency, Norfolk Island. Cockatoo Island receives the incorrigibles of New South Wales.

In May that year the entire live-stock of the colony, public and private, was found to consist of 2 bulls, 5 cows, 1 horse, 3 mares, 3 colts, 29 sheep, 19 goats, 74 pigs, 5 rabbits, 18 turkeys, 29 geese, 35 ducks, and 210 fowls. In the following month, two bulls and four cows were lost in the bush—a great apparent disaster, eventuating in most fortunate results; for these animals led by instinct, took their course inland, traversing the sterile and sandy tracts round Sydney, and finally choosing their pasture about forty miles from the settlement, on the banks of the Hakwsbury. Here they quickly multiplied, owing their safety from the natives to the novelty of their appearance, their fierce looks, sharp horns, and formidable voices. Seven years afterwards, Governor Hunter, having heard of the wild cattle on this spot, crossed the Nepean river, and discovered a herd

of forty head feeding in a well-grassed and watered country; so savage were they, that it was with difficulty that one or two of them were shot.

The troubles of the first governor were very great. The stores failed; the soil produced but little food. More prisoners arrived. He sent the *Sirius* with a party of troops and convicts to take possession of Norfolk Island; the ship was wrecked, and the provisions on board lost. The people lived on the mutton-bird, or sooty petrel, which swarmed on the island, until grain grew up. The convicts at Sydney became mutinous; many escaped. A party of twenty of them started for China, *by land*, in 1781, and the few who survived were brought back half starved to the settlement.

The blacks were troublesome. His Excellency himself was dangerously wounded by one of them. Food had to be sent for from Batavia and the Cape of Good Hope. Botany Bay and Port Jackson fortunately afforded great quantities of fish, which were caught and served out as rations. Agriculture was gradually established. Land was granted to a few free settlers, as well as to emancipated prisoners. Many of the marines, also, became colonists. The first settlers were located on the Paramatta river, and under the Prospect Hills, about twenty miles from Sydney. They were furnished with clothes and rations from the public stores for eighteen months, tools, implements of husbandry, seed-grain, live-stock, and, eventually, the services of such number of prisoners as they could engage to feed and clothe.

Thus originated the assignment system, the best ever invented, had it been properly administered; but being, like most other systems, open to abuse, abuse walked in as a matter of course. It relieved the treasury from the expense of maintenance, separated the convicts, and associated the better conducted of them with respectable families. To the colonists themselves this supply of labour, when no other was to be obtained, was an inestimable boon. When the boon was extended to emancipated and expiree prisoners, or to other worthless characters, it became an abuse.

Old chronological tables, as well as histories, testify that the birth and infancy of the colony were attended by natural prodigies, terrestrial and meteorological, such as might have been received as omens of failure, if not as warnings from on High, against the rise of a nation bearing on its scutcheon the fetter and the scourge—sad emblems for a nascent people. These phenomena providentially have not attended the maturer age of the colony. In the first year a severe shock of an earthquake was felt, with sulphureous exhalations from the ground. Others occurred in 1801 and 1806. Tremendous hail-storms, or rather showers of ice-flakes six and eight inches in circumference, destroyed young stock, poultry, and crops. Furious hurricanes and an influx of the sea occurred at Norfolk Island.

There were fearful and repeated floods of the Hawkesbury river, the most memorable of which, in 1806 and 1808, caused terrible devastation, and drove the settlement to absolute starvation. In the former case the

river rose seventy feet above its ordinary level. Wheat went up to seventy and eighty shillings the bushel, and bread to five shillings the loaf. The barracks were struck by lightning. The clock-tower crumbled down into ruins. Cattle and even men were killed in the storms.

Yet destructive to the rapid progress of the new colony as were these natural causes, there was another yet more disastrous—namely rum! In the absence of coin, rum became the chief article of exchange. Government officers, settlers, military men, emancipists and convicts, all dabbled in the dirty but lucrative traffic—and rum became a legal tender and the great circulating medium.

Licences to retail spirits were given to members of what might, at that time, have been styled the aristocracy of the society. Whilst the gentlemen so indulged were going about their official avocations, their assigned convict-servant—sometimes female convict and concubine—managed the shop and the till. Such was the paucity of women of good repute, and such the consequent general depravity, that in 1806 two-thirds of the children annually born were illegitimate.

The miserable spirit of huckstering, well styled by one of the early Governors, a "low and unmilitary occupation," brought about one of the most extraordinary instances of military usurpation extant in the history of the British army.

There is no colony in the world, perhaps, where

British troops have been so thoroughly without opportunities of distinction as in New South Wales. Beyond a skirmish or two with banditti, and a scuffle with the blacks under martial law of a few days' duration, I am not aware that they have ever been called out upon any active service which Major Sturgeon would have considered harassing. (In this remark I exclude of course the New Zealand war.) It is unfortunate, therefore, that after vainly hunting back for records of high emprize on the part of the troops in this dependency, one stumbles upon the deposition of the Governor by the officers and men of the New South Wales corps—afterwards embodied as the 102d Regiment.

The officers, having for some years engaged in the rum trade above mentioned, and dealing largely also in other wares obtained by them from the King's stores or from merchant vessels at prime cost and retailed at immense profit, (for they were privileged to have the first sight of the manifests and cargoes of all vessels arriving,) became naturally irate when this monopoly was threatened.

Captain Bligh, the famous commander of the *Bounty*, on assuming the Government, resolved to break up this monstrous system. His first blows were struck, right and left, against civil and military in the persons of a resident merchant and a captain of the New South Wales corps, to whom spirit stills had been consigned by their London agents, and which had arrived in a late vessel. The former gentleman was summoned "to show cause" for such a breach of harbour regulations; evaded

the summons; was apprehended; brought to trial before a criminal court, consisting of the Judge-Advocate (a civil officer) and six officers of the corps; protested against the former officiating as president, on the plea of his being prejudiced in the case and inimical to himself; and was supported in his objection by some of the members who joined him in a request that the Governor would appoint another judge—a substitution which His Excellency had no power to make. The Judge-Advocate, attempting to assert his authority, was resisted by the court. The Governor then summoned the six officers to appear before him and a bench of magistrates, to answer a charge of treasonable and rebellious practices preferred against them by the Judge-Advocate.

The Junior Major and pro-tem. Commandant was at this juncture confined to his house in the country by illness, on which plea he excused himself from waiting on and consulting with the much-troubled Governor on the question between him and the malcontent officers. The next day, however, the Major came into Sydney and repaired to the barracks, when the officers and other persons persuaded him to place the Governor in arrest, and to assume himself the government of the Colony. They first liberated Mr. M——, the restive merchant, from His Majesty's gaol, where he had been placed by the despotic judge, and authorized him to draw up a requisition to Major J—— to assume the chief power. Six gentlemen signed this requisition. (I am personally acquainted with the immediate descendants of five of

them, as well as those of the Charles the First and Cromwell of this stormy passage of colonial history.)

This violent measure was carried instantly into effect. The regiment paraded at seven o'clock the same evening, the twentieth anniversary of the colony, and was marched at a quick pace with fixed bayonets, band playing, and colours flying, to the Government House. The subaltern in command of the Governor's guard loaded and joined the corps with his men, and was pushing into the entrance-hall, when his advance was gallantly resisted by the fair daughter of His Excellency, then a young and pretty widow. The parasol which, "legends say," was on this occasion bravely wielded in defence of a father, proved but a poor *para sol-dat!* for the men rushing past the lady into the Governor's apartment, captured him in the act of destroying some important papers. The Commandant was installed as Governor. The real Governor was confined in the barracks, but was afterwards permitted to take command of H.M. ship *Porpoise*—then in harbour—in order to return to England.

In December 1809, Colonel Macquarie arrived at Sydney, with instructions to vindicate the laws by reinstating for twenty-four hours Governor Bligh, and then to be sworn in as his successor. The deposition of Governor Bligh was designated by the Secretary of State as a "mutinous outrage." The Major (who had meanwhile been promoted to a Lieut.-Colonelcy) was ordered home under arrest, was tried by a general court-martial in May 1811, and was cashiered—his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief confirming the

sentence, while he characterised it as "inadequate to the enormity of the crime."

The New South Wales corps was immediately relieved by H.M.'s 73d Regiment, whose gallant colonel, with great poetical justice, espoused the fair and spirited daughter of the ill-treated Governor. Mr. J——, late Lieut.-Colonel, returned to the colony, where he died much regretted, leaving considerable property. This singular event in the annals of the colony is minutely detailed in Lang's History of New South Wales.

However the colonists themselves and their corps might indulge in insurrectionary pastimes, they proved loyal and conservative enough when the convicts attempted rebellion; for the New South Wales corps were the terror of insurgent prisoners and bushrangers; and I find that in 1807 the "Sydney Loyal Association," 600 strong, enrolled themselves for the defence of the country and the government.

Some items of an old register I picked up in London before I left England, afford curious glimpses of the olden times of the settlement.

"1807.—Auction at the Green Hills on Saturday next. A capital grey horse with an elegant chaise and harness. Payment to be made in wheat, maize, or swine's flesh, at government price, or in copper coin."

"1810.—Market. Mutton, beef, and pork 1*s.* 6*d.* per lb.—wheat, 1*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.* per bushel—maize, 6*s.*—potatoes, 17*s.* 6*d.* per cwt.—fowls, 3*s.*—eggs, 2*s.* 6*d.* per dozen—wheaten bread, 12½*d.* per 2lb. loaf.

"*October* 15*th*.—First Races and Race Ball at Sydney. * * * The Ball-room was occupied until about two o'clock, when part of the company retired, and those that chose to remain formed into a supper party. After the cloth was removed the rosy Deity asserted his pre-eminence, and with the zealous aid of Momus and Apollo chased pale Cynthia down into the western world. The blazing orb of day announced his near approach. Bacchus drooped his head, and Momus ceased to animate," &c. &c.!

"*Execution*.—One Murphy hanged for sheep-stealing."

"*May* 19*th*, 1810.—Prisoners of the Crown directed to attend Divine service on the Sabbath-day."—Query—for the first time since the formation of the settlement in 1788?

"1812.—Government Public Notice and Order. Secretary's Office Sydney 10th Aug. 1812:—

"The extraordinary increase of curs and mongrels of a base and worthless description rendering the streets of Sydney dangerous to all persons, &c. &c., His Ex. the Governor is pleased to express a hope that the inhabitants of Sydney will take immediate means for the destruction of those degenerate and worthless animals, &c.!"

Never surely were dogs called by such a multitude of bad names!

"*December*.—Ten rams of the Merino breed, lately sold by auction from the flocks of John Macarthur, Esq., produced upwards of 200 guineas.

1815.—The road over the Blue Mountains to the New Territory finished.

1821.—Twenty-six prisoners capitally convicted at the Criminal Sessions, nineteen of whom were executed.

1822.—Thirty-four prisoners condemned to die at the Criminal Sessions in October!!

1824.—*August.*—Black Tommy executed for murder.

August 11*th.*—A Legislative Council, established by Royal Sign Manual, proclaimed in the colony.

October.—Liberty of the Press acknowledged by the Governor.

1826, *April* 29*th.*—Mr. Icely's thoroughbred mare Manto, imported per *Columbia*, dropped a fine bay foal—being the first thorough-bred animal produced in the colony.

October 19*th.*—H. M.'s ship *Warspite* the first (and only) 74 that ever entered Port Jackson, arrived with Commodore Sir James Brisbane.

1830.—Donohue, the desperate bushranger, shot by a party of mounted police at Raby.

1831.—His companions Webber and Walmsley captured.

April 19*th.*—A government order, prohibiting the abominable traffic with New Zealand for human heads, which had so long disgraced the colony.

1832, *April* 6*th.*—A soldier of the 30th Regiment, named Brennan, shot to death near Dawes Battery, pursuant to a sentence of Court-martial, for firing at a serjeant of his corps."

The honour of originating the Australian wool trade, now so famous, is due to Mr. John Macarthur, who, going to England about 1803, "displayed the samples of wool grown by himself in New South Wales to some brokers, who, foreseeing the advantage that would accrue to Great Britain if by its extensive cultivation the Australian fleece could be made to compete with the Spanish and Saxon article, interested themselves to obtain for Mr. Macarthur the special favour of the Home Government. In consequence, when Mr. M. returned, as he shortly did, he received a large grant of land suitable to his adventure, and a number of assigned servants sufficient for his purpose. He continued his operations with varying success at first, but ultimately with such profitable certainty as to make sheep-farming the general pursuit of the colony."*

I must allude but passingly to the vast alternations of prosperity and disaster which befel the colonists from the date of the live-stock first attaining a high value;—the wild spirit of speculation, the ruinous facility of credit, fictitious wealth and substantial extravagance, the mortgages, bankruptcies, monetary panics and commercial revolutions. They will be found correctly narrated by Lang, Braim, Westgarth, and others. They afford a wholesome lesson to young and rising colonies. In the three years 1842-3-4, when the population of New South Wales was only 162,000, there were 1,638 cases of sequestration of estates—the collective debts of which were three and a-half millions sterling!

* Braim's History of New South Wales.

With respect to the population of the colony—one Governor constituted himself the champion of the convicts—adopting the principle, that long tried good conduct should lead an offender back to that rank in society which he had forfeited, and do away all retrospect of former bad conduct. He gave to pardoned and expiree prisoners places of trust, and the *entrée* of Government House. He discountenanced free emigration.

His successor, on the contrary, kept the emancipists at a distance and encouraged immigration. A fierce jealousy grew up between the parties, bond and free. It became the business of a third Governor to allay these hostile feelings, and he succeeded as far as human nature would permit. The census of 1833 exhibits the population of New South Wales as follows:—

Free Males . . .	22,798	Convict Males . . .	21,845
Free Females . .	13,453	Convict Females . .	2,698
Total Free . . .	36,251	Total Convicts . . .	24,543
Grand Total	60,794		

Of the free population one-half were liberated convicts.

The disproportion of the sexes in the total population is very remarkable.*

In 1840 the number of convicts assigned to private service was 21,000 and upwards.†

On the 31st December 1849, the free population numbered 242,782; the bond, or convicts, 3,517; total, 246,299.

* Braim. † Terry.

publicly protested against, and contradicted the right of the Bishop of Rome to institute any episcopal or archi-episcopal see or sees within the diocese of Australia and province of Canterbury. Thus the "papal aggression" of 1850, whereof we in Australia heard so much in 1851, had commenced at Sydney seven years before. Like some disorder of the human frame, it had began at the extremities, gradually advancing towards the seat of life. God be thanked, however, the patient is vigorous and healthy; and the "insolent and insidious" malady will be thrown off, ere it hurtfully effects so sturdy a constitution!

I think it was in 1847 that the Bishop of Australia gave up 500*l.* a-year of his salary—one-fourth—in aid of providing other prelates for these colonies. I confess it gave me great pain to see this excellent man and venerable minister—the head of the established Church in this colony—going about his duties in a hack carriage;—for the reduction of his salary, and the many calls upon his purse, compelled him, after this sacrifice, to put down his own equipage. Meanwhile the Roman Catholic Archbishop—of whose character, public and private, be it said, I never heard aught but praise—was preeminent for his *point de vice* appointments, his "four-in-hand" being the only one in Sydney, except that of the Governor.

In these colonies it is necessary to remind the reader that there exists no dominant Church. In New South Wales the expenses of the Church of England, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic Establishments, are charged on the territorial revenue.

In 1843 it was found that, up to December 1842, upwards of 50,000*l.* had been defrayed from the treasury of New South Wales, for the missions and protectorate of the Aborigines. How small the result, I may have hereafter to show.

In 1847, the Squatters received, after long agitation of the question at home and abroad, the by them long desired and deserved fixity of tenure on their lands rented from the Crown.

In October 1846, the colony was invited to receive convicts once more. After much vacillation of counsel, the proposition was finally rejected in October 1850.

1849 *and* 50.—Great migration from New South Wales to California. *

1851.—A new constitution tendered to the colony—and remonstrated against by the colonists.

1851. *May.*—Gold discovered in New South Wales.

June 12*th.*—Governor Sir Charles Augustus Fitzroy sworn in at Sydney as first Governor-General of the Australian colonies.

July 1*st.* Port Phillip separated from New South Wales, and erected into an independent colony under the title of "Victoria," by proclamation of the Governor-general.

* It was towards the end of 1848, I think, that the intelligence of the discovery of gold in California reached New South Wales. In the first week of the following year four or five large vessels were chartered at Sydney for the transport of Australian diggers and speculators to that distant country. By the end of 1850 the population of the colony was reduced by nearly 5,000 persons, many of whom, by the way, had been brought from England to Sydney at the expense of the New South Wales Land Fund.

I had not been many months in New South Wales (as I have said), before an opportunity of seeing, under the most favourable auspices, something of the interior of the country was offered to me.

His Excellency Sir Charles Fitzroy, in his first address to the legislative council in 1846, informed that body, that he had come to the colony unbiassed by preconceived opinions, and that to enable him to judge for himself on some of the main questions then in agitation, he should take an early occasion of visiting in person the inland counties, as well as some of the districts beyond the boundaries of location—commonly called the Squatting Districts. He fixed upon the beginning of November in that year for his first trip, which was to extend to Bathurst and Wellington, with a run through the pastoral tracts westward of those counties; and the author was invited to accompany the expedition.

Accordingly, on the 9th of November, 1846, the party left Sydney. It consisted of the Governor and Lady Mary Fitzroy; Mr. George Fitzroy, the private Secretary; Mr. E. Deas Thomson, the colonial Secretary; and myself. We had with us four male and one female servants, with two men of the mounted police as escort—the latter being relieved at each station on the road.

Sir Charles had turned out, expressly for travelling a new carriage—a sort of mail phaëton, with a hood, a rumble, and a very high driving box, under which was a spacious boot for luggage.

On the perch swung a small leathern receptacle for tools, screws, nuts, buckles, straps &c., likely to be useful

in cases of fracture or accident—cases of very frequent occurrence, as may be supposed, in bush journeys. I particularly notice this latter appliance, and recommend it for adoption by all travellers in a rough and thinly peopled country. This vehicle, with four horses, was driven by his Excellency, who is an accomplished whip.

The Colonial Secretary and myself occupied a light open carriage and pair, each contributing a horse; and my English valet attended us. We had a huge gig umbrella, which could be "stepped" like a boat's mast, to save us as much as might be from wet jackets and scorched faces. There was nothing remarkable in our outfit, except a large rattan basket, covered with oilcloth, which was hooked on behind, and held a multitude of requisites not easily stowed in a small vehicle. A dog-cart followed, carrying two servants.

The road between Sydney and Paramatta is so well known that I shall say nothing of it on this occasion, beyond noting the singular fact, that the annual lease of the Annandale turnpike, the first on the road out of Sydney, was sold by auction in 1848, for 3,005*l.*—about half the yearly proceeds of Waterloo Bridge, where foot passengers also pay.

A very dusty drive of fifteen miles brought us to the town of Paramatta, whereof more anon; where, crossing the river by a handsome stone bridge, and descending its left bank about two miles, we came to Vineyard, the residence of Mr. Hannibal Macarthur, at which place we were to remain two nights. The house is large, and better constructed for a hot climate than the majority of

the Sydney dwellings. It is prettily situated on a bend of the river, with a spacious lawn—not green, but brown, at this season—in front, beautiful gardens, orangeries, and vineyards, all bounded by the dense forest, or bush. Here our party was most hospitably treated. What with driving, riding, boating, and bathing in the morning; feasting, singing, and dancing in the evening, the rosy and somewhat sultry hours flew as fast as they conveniently could, the range of the thermometer, between 80° and 90°, being taken into consideration.

The proprietor of Vineyard is a member of the Legislative Council, and a large land and stock owner. He is, moreover, the father of a numerous family, who may well be cited as most favourable specimens of the "Currency" race. At a later period of my stay in the colony, Mr. Macarthur went to reside in the interior, and this pretty and cheerful place, falling into the hands of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, was converted into a convent,—in worldly and my eyes, a most melancholy change.

November 10*th*.—Passed the day in lionizing Paramatta. It is a considerable village, or rather town, well laid out, but low, and in summer extremely hot, being entirely surrounded by land considerably higher than its site, which screens it from the sea-breeze—the life-blood of the Sydneyites, and other dwellers near the coast.

The town is conveniently placed at the head of the navigation of the salt creek miscalled the Paramatta River, which is, indeed, nothing more than an inlet of Port

Jackson. A small freshwater-stream, not always fluent, is thrown back by a dam just above the town, and is thus saved from pollution by the sea-water, which at high-tide washes the lower slope of that barrier.

It is not easy to find anywhere prettier cottages than many of those dropped down in their trim little gardens in this earliest—one can hardly use the term, most ancient—of Australian country towns. At this season there is a profusion of flowers in full bloom, not yet burnt up by the sun of the fast-coming summer. The verandahs and porches are perfectly embowered with creeping-plants—vines, woodbines, bignonias, passion-flowers, &c. The verandah of one of the inns is completely curtained by a magnificent glycine, covered with its pale purple clusters. Immense standard orange-trees and figs grow in some of the enclosures; and there are some tolerably good specimens of the English oak, which, however, does not take kindly to the climate and soil of this country.

In the towns of New South Wales, the first object upon which the stranger's eye falls, is some grand building devoted to the custody and coercion of convicts; —in civiler terms, to the accommodation of its original white population; or to their protection, when age or disease, mental and bodily, may have overtaken them, —gaols, in short, hospitals, lunatic asylums, and the like.

At Paramatta, the most prominent of these establishments—a handsome solid stone edifice, a "stone-jug" well calculated to contain the most ardent and effervescent spirits—is the Female Factory, where prisoners of that sex, sanely or insanely unruly, are incarcerated. I had

an opportunity of visiting it with the Governor; and have no wish either to repeat the visit, or to dwell on the details thereof. The numbers of the tenants of this establishment are, since the cessation of transportation, much diminished; but it is not many years ago that the Amazonian inmates, amounting to seven or eight hundred, and headed by a ferocious giantess, (by all accounts, a regular she-Ajax,) rose upon the guards and turnkeys, and made a desperate attempt at escape by burning the building. The officer commanding the troops then occupying the stockade, who gave me this account, sent a subaltern with a hundred men, half of them armed only with sticks, and an effort was made to drive the fair insurgents within one of the yards, in order to secure them. This manœuvre, however, failed. They laughed at the cane-carrying soldiers, refuting their *argumentum baculinum* by a furious charge upon the gates, in which one man was knocked over by a brickbat from Mrs. Ajax. The military were reinforced; the magistrate made them load with ball-cartridge, and the desperadas were eventually subdued.

This unladylike ebullition was considered, as I am assured, the most formidable convict outbreak that ever occurred in the colony, not even excepting that of Castle Hill, in the year 1804! I believe the periodical close-cropping of the women's hair was the prime cause of the outbreak. From Samson downwards it has been a dangerous trick to play man or woman. I have known many a good soldier rendered disaffected by the harassing warfare waged against his whiskers and side-locks by martinet officers. In the case of the Paramatta factory,

the Governor was diplomatic enough to relax the depilatory laws.

A penitentiary is not precisely the market to which a squeamish man would go for a wife. The Governor, however, was, in old times, besieged by applications, both from manumitted prisoners and respectable settlers, for helpmates from this factory. I was told by an officer who had been an eye-witness of the same, that it was amusing to see the aspirant for matrimony passing in review a lot of women selected to be chosen from. Good looks were but a trifling consideration; former character and mode of life were proscribed subjects of inquiry. Health and strength, with tolerable conduct in prison, were sufficient dower.

The stockade of Castle Hill, of which a few bricks now alone mark the site, was placed on a beautiful range of hills, a few miles north of the Paramatta River, at present covered with settlers, and distinguished for luxuriant orange-orchards and vineyards. Several hundred prisoners were employed there by the Government in clearing and cultivating the country, then clothed with forest. These men, having contrived to collect about 150 stand of arms, besides pistols, pikes, pitchforks, and other agrarian weapons, advanced, in number about 360, upon Paramatta. The major commanding the New South Wales corps, having notice of the conspiracy, marched from Sydney with only forty men, (all that were available for the service,) and without hesitation attacked the rebels, who, having but a bad cause, made but a bad fight. The result may be given in a few words. Sixteen were killed out of hand,

twelve wounded, thirty made prisoners. "The rest they ran away;" but, being starved out, they yielded, and five were hanged. Those were not the days when any scruples existed as to the orthodoxy of hemp as an instrument of correction. There was no fear of Exeter Hall before the eyes of the local executive. In an old history of the early days of the colony, I find that somewhere about the same date six soldiers were brought to the gallows at once, "for the unpardonable crime of procuring false keys to the public stores, and committing frequent robberies upon them while on guard." Their offence was aggravated by the fact, that the then infant settlement of Sydney was in the greatest distress for provisions; and the punishment was the more appropriate, that it diminished by so many the mouths consuming the scanty stock! In 1850 these plunderers would possibly have gotten fifty lashes at the triangles, and a sensitive and humane public and press would have fulminated indignant remonstrances at the barbarity of the sentence.

There are two excellent inns at Paramatta, which must be chiefly supported by the jaunting cits of Sydney. Their most interesting and, doubtless, most lucrative customers, are, however, the cooing couples from the flaunting metropolis, who repair to this rural and quiet village for the short period devoted in this country to the honey-moon—for honey-lunacy is but a very temporary derangement where the votaries are people of business. But if only a half-moon in duration, it may be reckoned a full one in splendour; for Mr. Edwards's or Mr. Seale's best clarences and best four horses (unicorn at the least!)

may be seen every week at the portico of St. James's church, plated harness, satin favours and all, dashing away with some experimental pair to the nuptial bowers of the "Red Cow" or "Wool-pack," or, perhaps, further a-field to the "Black Horse" at Richmond,—on the Hawkesbury, not the Thames,—where something like retirement, in a public-house, may be enjoyed. One wants the post-boys, though! An awkward, pully-hawly, broad-brimmed, mufti old coachman, whose whip has no sort of connexion with his leaders, and who has no notion of the pace rigorously correct on such occasions, jars upon one's prejudices, and introduces the "jog-trot," sooner or later an infallible element of wedlock, much too early in its career!

Paramatta is the Richmond, the Versailles, the Barrackpore of Sydney. The *plaisance* of the Governor is situated on a gentle eminence above the fresh-water stream, a few hundred yards westward of the town, looking over the trees of its lawn directly down the main street, which may be three quarters of a mile in length, abutting upon the Sydney steam-boat wharf. The dwelling-house looks like that of an English country squire or gentleman farmer, of some 1,500*l.* a-year. It was much out of repair at the time of my first visit, but was thoroughly put in order for the present Governor. I have passed many happy hours under its shingled roof.

The domain around the house comprises a Government reserve of 5,000 acres. Some part of it, the Toongabee Hills, is prettily undulated and well cleared. The greater portion, however, remains in its native bush state. The

whole is substantially fenced in. Treated as a farm, this place ought to be worth several hundreds a-year to its possessor.

Either as a place of residence or resort, Paramatta possesses great advantages in its double access by land and water—wheels or paddles. On a cool day, the trip by the river is very pleasant as well as pretty. The country on the northern bank is elevated and picturesque; and both shores are studded here and there with solid stone houses and snug cottages, with tolerable gardens, and orange orchards truly Hesperidean in their profusion of golden fruit. The passer by their fences must himself be a "dragon of virtue" to resist despoiling them. On the whole, however, considering that it is more than half a century since the river's banks were first settled by grants from Government to free colonists and half-freed convicts, the river allotments are not so thickly populated as might be expected from their vicinity to Sydney, nor as would have been the case had the water been fresh.

A French traveller, my fellow-passenger in my first trip up this creek, fell into ecstacies—ecstacies are cheap in France—with the scenery on either hand, pronouncing it "*charmant, charmant!*" and declaring that it was a *chose étonnante* that the banks were not covered with the villas of the rich seigneurs and citizens of Sydney.* There is plenty of fish in the stream, especially the guard-fish, or dagger-fish as it might be called, for it closely resembles in appearance a miniature sword-fish.

* The finest place on the Paramatta River is Newington, the residence of the Blaxland family, whose late head was one of the earliest and wealthiest emigrants from the Old Country.

Paramatta has not the air of a thriving place. Amongst the causes of its evident financial indisposition are assigned the removal of the Government establishments on the cessation of transportation, and the undue absorption of trade into the capital—an instance of centralization unequalled in any part of the world, for nearly one-fourth of the population of a country, perhaps 700 miles long by 250 in width, is crowded into the chief town. Houses may be had here at 50 per cent. below the Sydney rates of rent. Provisions are no dearer than at the capital.

November 11*th*.—An early start—for early starting is the soul of Australian travelling—from Vineyard *en route* for Bathurst. Passing through Paramatta, whose somewhat somnolent echoes were startled by the sound of the ten wheels and thirty-six horse-shoes of our cavalcade, and skirting the Domain, we soon found ourselves trotting briskly along the high-road to Penrith, our half-way stage of this day's work, a village about nineteen miles from Paramatta. Our route up to that place lay through the metropolitan county of Cumberland. Without being absolutely picturesque, the country is agreeably undulated, the soil good in many parts, and free from the deep ravines common to the sandstone tracts. Even in these days there appears, along the road-side, at least ten times more bush than cleared land; but the woods are all fenced in for pasturing purposes.

We were particularly struck with the fine dark loam of the Prospect Hills, cultivated to the very summits, and the well-chosen site of Veteran Hall, the residence of Mr. Lawson, with its luxuriant orange-groves and

vineries, contrasting in their vivid green with the leaden hue of the gum forest below. This gentleman, one of the oldest, if not the oldest inhabitant of the colony, was formerly an officer of the New South Wales corps, which was raised in England for the purpose of escorting prisoners of the Crown to the colony, and of eventually becoming settlers. He was of the proper stuff for one of the pioneers of a raw, rough country. That he possessed the necessary personal activity is proved by his constant practice, before horses were common, of walking from the barracks at Sydney to Prospect one day, and back the next, as a common occurrence, and in the hottest weather—about twenty miles.

Mr. Lawson was one of the three gentlemen who first penetrated those same Blue Mountains, over whose ridges we are now about to pass by means of as good a hill-road as any in New, or indeed old, South Wales. I find this exploit alluded to in a notice to the colonists by Governor Macquarie, dated 10th June, 1815, in these words:—

"To Gregory Blaxland and William Wentworth, Esquires, and Lieutenant Lawson, of the Royal Veteran Company, the merit is due of having, with extraordinary patience and much fatigue, effected the first passage over the most rugged and difficult part of the Blue Mountains."*

The weather of this day was terribly oppressive. It was thought that our start had been made too late in the season; but the quick passage through the air, the occurrence of new objects, and the knowledge that in a

* "Old Ironbark" died full of years in 1850. Mr. Lawson was thus familiarly styled, after the hardy forest-tree of that name.

few hours we should have climbed into a cooler climate, prevented, so long as we were in motion, any feeling of exhaustion from the heat.

Many of the road-side inns—and every mile or two has some establishment of the kind, ranging between the hotel and the shebeen house—are rurally picturesque, reminding one pleasantly of home. They are generally built of weatherboards on a frame of wood, with a bit of garden in the rear, the old-fashioned horse trough hollowed from the trunk of a tree, now almost extinct in England, in front, and a tall sign-post bearing some old familiar title, "The Traveller's Home," "The Cottage of Content," so expressive of welcome as to be well-nigh irresistible, especially when the sun is hot, and the weather and the traveller are equally dry. And, indeed, there is a large class of wayfarers in this country, (perhaps in all others,) who never resist this particular invitation. In some of my rides and drives from Sydney to Paramatta, I have been astounded by the powers of absorption displayed by certain of my fellow-countrymen, especially when horse-racing happened to be the ostensible object of the passengers on the road. At a moderate calculation there is a pothouse for every mile of the fifteen; and I am certain that the same gig, with the same two fat men, have passed me, pulled up, and repassed me ten times in that distance. Tasting every tap, and trusting, I suppose, to profuse perspiration as a safety valve from absolute explosion, they were to be found tossing off a foaming glass under every sign-post, while the wretched horse got no refreshment beyond a temporary relief from the weight of his masters.

"That ain't a bad nag, Sir; steps well. There can't

be much less than two-and-thirty 'stun' in that buggy, Sir," remarked to me my old coachman, (who had driven for twenty-five years between London and Huntingdon,) as we were tandeming along one day on this road; and in ten miles we had as many opportunities of admiring the speed and action of the horse, and the size and sponginess of the two Sydney butchers who sat behind him.

The most abject-looking little bush taverns on Australian roads do not fail to announce "Good accommodation for travellers;" and many of them advertise "Secure paddocks for teams and fat cattle, with good water." The poor people pick up a good penny from the travelling drays and the herds coming down for the Sydney market. At one of the more pretentious public-houses where we stopped to water our horses there was a private race-course belonging to the establishment; and a notice was put up that a "First-rate Saddle" and a "Prime fat Hog" would be run for on a day named—a common scheme for collecting together a crowd of drinkers.

His Excellency had been apprised that addresses would be presented at all the towns on the line of march. Accordingly at Penrith, before we had time to look round us, we found ourselves in a very stuffy crowded little court-house, where a cut-and-dried but most loyal and hearty address was read to the new Governor, and an equally ready-made but complimentary reply was rendered in exchange.

Penrith is a neat little town; yet I was assured that the town is not a town, because the proper site of the township is at some distance, having been abandoned,

for the present position, on account of the brackishness of the water. Even here on higher ground the water is brought from the river, a mile off at least; and at the inns it tastes and smells like very weak grog, the supply being kept in old spirit casks.

After the presentation of the address we regained our dusty carriages, and passing onwards through the village and along a mile or so of road lined with pretty cottages—pretty although formed only of "split stuff" and bark, we reached the "Emu Ferry Inn," an excellent two-storied brick-house posted on the right bank of the Nepean river.

Here, halting to refresh ourselves and horses, we found good rooms and wholesome fare, with the drawbacks, however, of an unmannerly host and a landlady so ultra Yankee-like in her independence, that it did not permit her to rise from her chair to receive the daughter of a Duke and the lady of the Governor!

In 1850, when travelling as a family man, I passed an hour or two at this inn for rest and refreshment, when both host and hostess were equally invisible, neither of them condescending to welcome the coming nor speed the parting guest. All transactions were, perforce, carried on with the servants. In travelling, civility is the only gilding to the bitter pill of overcharge; and in New South Wales it too often happens that the passenger finds in unfair connexion a dirty hovel and a morose landlord with the charges of Mivart's or the Clarendon.

My brother colonels and my superior officers the generals, keeping hotels in the United States, are infi-

nitely more affable to their inmates—especially when the former happen to be in their "post of exercise, in rear" of their bar, and the latter are addicted to juleps.

On my return down the country I purposely avoided Wilson's inn at the Emu Ferry—which I hereby placard as a lesson to uncourteous innkeepers. Johnson and Shenstone would hardly have prosed and poetised in favour of such-like "inns."

CHAPTER V.

THE NEPEAN RIVER—ESTATES IN THE VALLEY—EMU PLAINS—LAPSTONE HILL—CONVICT LABOUR—A PENINSULAR BONIFACE—BULLOCK DRAYS AND DRIVERS—FOREST TREES—BLUE MOUNTAIN INN—BUSH FIRES—BLACKHEATH—CONVICT STOCKADE—RUNAWAYS—MURDERS—BUSH-RANGERS—ANECDOTES—MOUNTED POLICE—THEIR CONFLICTS WITH BANDITTI AND BLACKS—CAPTURES—JUVENILE BRIGANDAGE.

THE view from the Ferry inn, looking westward, is very striking. Right in front, across the Nepean, the long range of the Blue Mountains rises abruptly out of the dreary, sun-baked flat of Emu Plains—those Blue Mountains so long, (nearly a quarter of a century, indeed,) the western boundary of New South Wales; for it was not until the year 1815, when the great road was completed, that Governor Macquarie travelled by it to the champaign country beyond these Australian Pyrenees, and announced to the colonists the newly laid open land of promise. Thitherto the territory occupied by the English extended only eighty miles north and south of Port Jackson, by forty from that harbour to the base of the hills.

Many and desperate attempts had indeed been made by enterprising individuals to penetrate and explore

this great natural barrier. As the flocks and herds increased, and wider pastures became a question of life and death to them and of ruin or prosperity to their owners, these attempts became more resolutely obstinate, and were ultimately crowned with success.

Through a deep gorge a few miles south of the ferry, the Nepean bursts upon the low country with a tribute of fresh water such as is nowhere equalled in the settled districts of this arid continent. Passing onwards in its fertilising course, and washing the townships of Richmond and Windsor, it, unreasonably enough, changes its name to the Hawkesbury, and finally loses itself in the estuary of Wide Bay on the eastern coast.

There are some really fine estates in this neighbourhood; that of the late Sir John Jamison is in sight of the inn. The name of Regentville, is, in the mind of old colonists, associated with the times and practice of unbounded hospitality and profuse expenditure, such as never again will be seen in New South Wales.

A whole clan of the family of Cox are settled along the river's banks within visiting distance of each other, and, on family epochs, meet together in formidable numbers. At a later date I passed some pleasant hours at two of the houses of this family.

Fernhill, the residence of Mr. Edward Cox, is only a few miles from Penrith. A handsome stone house overlooks by far the most lovely and extensive landscape—as a home view—I ever met with in Australia; and its beauty is much enhanced by the taste and success of the proprietor in weeding out the thinly leafed and unsightly kinds of the gum-tree, and

preserving only that species of the Eucalyptus called the apple-tree, which, with its stout gnarled branches and crisp tufted foliage, is, when standing alone or in clumps on parkish looking ground, by no means a bad representative of the English oak. Were it not for the vineyards and wine-houses at Fernhill, a stranger might imagine himself at the country-house of some substantial English 'squire.

Mr. Cox's neighbours north and south in the beautiful vale of Mulgoa are two of his brothers. The three estates comprise about 11,000 acres, and, all being cleared in the same tasteful manner—not a stump left to deface the pastures—there is an unity of homelike landscape unlike anything else of the kind I have met with out of England. The vale of Mulgoa, along which these properties extend, looks, from the heights of Fernhill, as if it were intended to be the bed of the Hawkesbury. This great river, however, after meandering about for some distance among the sunny meads of the peaceful and fertile valley, turns abruptly into the mountains, and, losing itself for twelve or fourteen miles among wild crags and dismal forests, re-appears through a grand rocky portal, placid and smiling, upon the Emu Plains, and so takes leave of the Blue Mountains for ever, on its way towards the ocean.

In my wanderings along the valley of the Hawkesbury, I have seen the properties, with handsome dwelling-houses on them, of six of the Cox family, inherited from their father, who, like many of the oldest and wealthiest of the colonists, served formerly in the New South Wales corps. To persons like him a grant of

land from Government was the foundation of a fortune; to many others only the commencement of ruin.

From Fernhill I rode one day to Regentville. There are sermons in its stones,—in its gardens and vineries ruined and run to waste,—its cattle-trampled pleasure grounds, its silent echoes. My foot sank through the floor where many a joyous measure had been trod. The rafters were rotting that had ofttimes rung to the merriment of host and guest; and, if rumour lies not, there were "*sad* doings" as well as merry ones at Regentville in the days of its prosperity!

Just below the park in the valley stands the huge shell of a steam-mill which cost 7,000*l.* and was intended for a mill of all trades; and not far from it a windmill equally remarkable for size and solidity. The steam-mill never got up its steam to any good purpose for its enterprising builder; and as for the windmill—putting aside its present want of sails—its position is so surrounded with high hills that it can never have raised the wind to a remunerative amount for him or any one else.

To return to Emu Ferry.

At mid-day we crossed the river by a punt running on a rope. The mode of traject is very inconvenient, and it is to be hoped the colony will soon be rich enough to afford a bridge.

The ardent and ignorant sportsman, who expects to find emus on Emu Plains, will no more succeed than he would in finding buffaloes in the streets of Buffalo on Lake Erie. As there are now no bisons within 1,000 miles of that go-a-head town, so there are no emus

within 200 or 300 miles of the Plains named after that bird.

The river, now about 200 yards wide, appears to have formerly flowed over the whole expanse of the flat land, for on its thinly grassed surface are scattered quantities of large quartz boulders—pebbles such as Goliah might have slung at David, had their duel been conducted with slings "for two."

I looked in vain for any traces of the Government agricultural establishment which had been formed and maintained at vast expense. The military, commissariat, and police stations have dwindled down to an invalid soldier or two in charge of sundry tumble-down buildings, and one or two fat constables full of beans and with nothing to do. If proofs of decadence such as this are chargeable on the withdrawal of the convict system, it requires some courage and self-denial to rejoice in the cause.

Having traversed the Plains for two miles as straight as a French causeway, the road runs plump against the Blue Mountains, or rather against that part of them called Lapstone Hill, and begins to wriggle up the ascent as best it can under the directing hand of the engineer.

The southern flank of a profound ravine abutting upon the Plains has been chosen for the eastern terminus of the Great Mountain Road; and I think there is no part of it finer or more creditable as a work.

The highway is absolutely carved out of the living rock. Huge slices of the hill side have been blown off by blasting, hurled by convict crowds into the gulph

below, or pounded by them into the material now called Macadam. "Villanous saltpetre" and villanous humanity have been the great agents here, as in many other parts of New South Wales. Had England been always "virtuous," there would have been no "cakes and ale" here. Had she reared no robbers and homicides, burglars and forgers, the Australian Colonies in general, and the Great Western Road in particular, would, in all human probability, never have existed.

On our right yawned a profound gully, at the bottom of which, struggling through water-worn crags and fallen logs,—proofs of foregone torrents,—was hardly to be discerned a wretched little streamlet, quite out of human reach. Beyond the gully rose a rough jagged precipice, with hardy and obstinate trees of large growth clinging to its face; enabling the traveller to form an estimate of the difficulties encountered in making the road on this side of the ravine. Right and left, above, below, the everlasting gum-tree filled the landscape;—the gum in all its varieties—and its varieties are scarcely various. But in the dark and damp spots near the water-course, the graceful casuarina, the delicate yellow-blossomed acacia, and a lofty kind of box, with small shining leaves, mingled branches refreshingly with the great staple of the bush.

At the top of Lapstone Hill the horses were allowed five minutes to recover their wind, and ourselves to admire a very pretty bridge thrown across the head of a dry gully. Among the scrub under the arch was a peach-tree in full blossom, evidently owing its birth to

a stone thrown away by a fruit-eating traveller from the Plains.

At nine miles from the Nepean, having been one hour and fifty minutes in performing that distance, we reached the "Welcome Inn," kept by a jolly old-soldier named James, who rejoices in a Waterloo medal, a pretty daughter, and, what was more to our purpose than either, some excellent bottled ale. In these parts this delicacy costs 3*s*. a-bottle,—not a wonderful price when one considers the distance and difficulties between its native brewery on the banks of Trent and the top of the Australian Cordillera.

The old campaigner had fought through the Peninsula in the 40th regiment, as he informed me, and came out to this country in a company of veterans escorting prisoners. Three years later, when I paid him a second visit, his Waterloo medal had been joined by another, granted by her Majesty for Peninsular service, with two or three clasps for general actions; his pretty daughter had married and left him; and his ale had come down 6*d*. a-bottle.

Beyond this house we toiled through miles and miles of heavy sand, with dense forests on either hand, and without a human habitation to cheer the scene. The ascent, however, after the first thousand feet, is fortunately gradual. Here and there we met long caravans of drays, drawn by six or eight horses, or ten or twelve bullocks, and laden with wool-bales, hides, &c.: or we overtook similar vehicles charged with stores—tea, sugar, tobacco, &c.—chiefly for the

great squatters of the interior; for in the distant districts, if the employers of labour failed to act as commissaries for the subsistence of their servants, the latter might starve, there being few and often no shops whence they could procure the commonest necessaries of life.

Wherever nature or the last thunder-storm had supplied a rill, a spring, a water-hole, or even a puddle, however muddy, we found encampments of these slow-moving wains, the horses and oxen hobbled and turned adrift to feed on the scanty herbage; some of the drivers cooking at the root of a huge half-burnt tree, that looked as if it had served as stove and oven time out of mind; others smoking in the shade, or sleeping on mattresses or fur rugs spread under their drays, where, at night, with the aid of a tarpaulin, they are secure from rain and dew. Strange, wild-looking, sun-burnt race, strong, rough, and taciturn, they appear as though they had never lived in crowds, and had lost the desire and even the power to converse. So deeply embrowned were the faces, naked breasts, and arms of these men, and so shaggy the crops of hair and beard, that a stranger had to look twice to be certain they were not Aborigines. I have seen many an oriental tribe much fairer in skin.

The halting-places seem to be well known and used by all. They are generally some small level plateau, whereon the grass grows greener from the manure of the frequent cattle. There were women with some of the bullock-drivers' camps, or perched on the moving drays, most of them meet helpmates for their rude partners; yet now and then, like a lily among the thistles,

there peeped from under the awnings a pretty young face,—so fair and young, indeed, as to be hardly in its teens. Amongst the rugged and weather-worn males, old and middle-aged, I noticed some of the tallest and handsomest young men I ever saw.

Except in the gullies, the forest trees of these mountains are rather stunted than large. Among the leading trees are the Ironbark, with its tall, black, upright, and rugose trunk, looking the very picture of hardihood. The timber is extremely useful, making the strongest and most lasting fences. Under ground it resists rot as well as "Kyaned" oak at home. There is the Stringy Bark, a gum with the streamers of its epidermis twenty and thirty feet long, hanging like a beggar's garment from its ragged stem, or rolled up on the ground precisely like great sticks of cinnamon. There is the White Gum, with its smooth, polished, round, and naked boughs, looking so like human limbs as to be almost indecent in their nudity.

Among the smaller growth of the bush is the Bottle-brush, with its rigid cones and harsh leaf, contrasting sharply with two delicate and graceful neighbours,—the Exocarpus or native cherry, and the Wattle or Acacia, covered with golden bloom, and embalming the surrounding air. Beneath these, in some places, grew a showy underwood of Euphorbias, Epacris, Boronias, Correas, and I know not what besides. Gleaming through all was sand,—sand sufficient to supply Old Time's hour glass to all eternity.

Late in the afternoon—at 21 miles from Penrith and 40 from Paramatta, a hard day's journey—we reached

"The Blue Mountain Inn" kept by the more civil brother of him of the Emu Ferry;—and a very creditable establishment.

This situation is 2,800 feet above the level of the sea, and the prospect very fine. Towards the north the eye ranges over the mountain tracts across the great ravine formed by the Grose River, until it lights upon Mount Thomar, rising like an island in the midst of the billowy forest. Whilst looking eastward through the clear air and over an immense expanse of hill and plain, the sand-hills of Sydney are distinctly visible at a distance of 50 or 60 miles.

November 12th.—This day to Binning's Inn—34 miles. Starting at 6 A.M. we reached the Weather Board Hut, a police station, where there is also a tavern, in about an hour of heavy pulling. Here enthusiasts in scenery are expected to halt, in order to visit the Regent's Glen. Having however a long day's journey before us, and a scenic lion of the same character and calibre to visit at Blackheath—the half-way baiting place,—we pushed on, through sand and rock and gum forest, to Pulpit Hill—why so called I could neither guess nor discover; where we got a substantial and welcome breakfast on ham and eggs and a 'spatched cock—very literally—for we witnessed his pursuit and heard his death cries.

Thence onward, the scenery growing wilder, the climate cooler, we got some splendid glimpses of the sea of hills through which we were ploughing our way. On the right was pointed out the distant valley or rather gully of Cox's River, which cuts its channel through

piled-up walls of red and white sandstone crowned with bush. On the left we skirted for miles a range of stag-headed forest, dying apparently from the roots of the huge trees having struck the rock—a most dismal scene, only perhaps equalled by a subsequent one of thousands of acres of thickly-timbered land all around us in progress of destruction by fire; fallen log and flourishing tree, fresh sapling, flower, and shrub and herb all blazing and blackened and smoking—vast result perhaps of a spark from a stockman's pipe, or the cast-away cigar-end of a thoughtless mail-passenger; not a blade left on many a weary league of sand and rock—not a drop of water, for the doomed oxen that are counting upon both on their upward journey. Truly here was the sublimity of desolation!

The periodical occurrence of bush-fires is general throughout Australia. Every tolerable sized tree is more or less charred by them. Sir Thomas Mitchell, in one of his expeditions into the wild interior, found "in the most remote and desolate places the marks of fire on every dead trunk and tree of any magnitude."

Suddenly the highway became smooth as a bowling-green, beautifully macadamized; and our carriages trundled on the nails of their new tire-irons into Blackheath; for here resides Captain Bull of the 99th Regiment—a Colossus of roads, in his way—as is testified by the great improvement he has wrought upon them to a considerable distance on either side of his station.

The settlement of Blackheath consists of a convict stockade under charge of that officer, and a pretty good

inn—Gardner's, more lately Bloodsworth's. The commandant's house is backed against the bush, overlooking the cantonments of his detachment and the huts of the prisoners under his orders. The barracks and convict "boxes" form a little hamlet of some two dozen buildings of white-washed slabs with tall stone chimneys, laid out on a rocky plateau cleared of trees, and commanding a prospect of melancholy and desolate sterility—qualities certainly not reflected upon the joyous countenances of the captain and his wife, nor symbolical of his well-peopled nursery.

The prisoners here form what is called an iron-gang—or ironed gang. They are employed working, in chains, and for periods according to sentence, on the repairs of the high road. We passed several lots of these wretched creatures—England's galley-slaves—clanking along with straddling gait and hopeless hang-dog looks to their allotted labours, escorted by soldiers; or working with pick and spade, crowbar, maule and wedge on the stubborn rocks—working with mule-like slowness and sulkiness because forced to work by fear of the lash. 'Tis thus that convict labour is less valuable than at first would appear. Unpaid and compulsory work is always bad and slow work.

His Excellency had a parade of the prisoners, and we passed down the ranks as we might have done those of a regiment. The sciences of phrenology and physiognomy may be fallacies; but here was undoubtedly a line of countenances and craniums, laid bare for inspection by the close-cut hair, such as Lavater and Gall would have perused very much as if they were perusing the

Newgate Calendar or the "Causes Célèbres." Nor would they have read amiss; for many of the squad under review had been convicted of the blackest crimes that ever be-devilled humanity.

The convicts are marched to and watched at their work, marched to and watched at their meals, which they eat in a shed open at back and front,—marched to their wooden beds, and shut up under lock and bayonet until morning; yet, spite of all care and vigilance, many of them have escaped or tried to escape—braving the bullet of the sentries, the lash, Cockatoo Island, the gallows, and what is hardly less terrible, the chance of dying of hunger in the bush.

The scaffold is the more frequent destiny of the successful runaway from such a place as Blackheath. He has neither food nor money; he would be recognised as a prisoner by his grey dress and his close-cut hair, if, having contrived to rid himself of his chains, he were to beg a crust of bread at a road-side house. One resource only offers itself, not very repugnant probably to his case-hardened mind. He lies in wait, cudgel in hand, for some lonely traveller, rushes upon him unawares, strikes him senseless, takes his money, his clothes, and his arms, if he have any. Should he resist he murders him, and casts the body into some lonely gully.

"Murder will out,"—and strange have been the means of detection in such cases: a drayman in search of stray oxen, a passing dog, attracted by the scent of the mouldering corpse, the unerring sagacity of the black scouts of the Mounted Police—have been the instruments of discovery. Even when the assassin has resorted to

the common stratagem of burning the remains of his victim under a pile of dead wood, a scrap of cloth, a button, even the peculiar size of a limb bone which has escaped combustion, have been sufficient to identify the murdered man, and to throw suspicion, perhaps conviction, on the murderer.

It will readily be believed that, during a journey like that we are now prosecuting, and in the wildest part of that country where bush-ranging may be said to have been first invented—especially when strangers in the colony were the listeners—bush-ranging became a frequent subject of conversation. It will be conceded too that Blackheath, from its old Home associations, is no inappropriate locale for some slight allusion to the subject. The numerical strength of our party and our escort of police rendered us perfectly secure from any attack, although several notorious runaways were known to be harbouring somewhere within reach of the road among the deep fastnesses of the mountain.

The ransom of a Governor might indeed have tempted a bandit of high pretensions. But, in truth, the days of bush-ranging on a large scale are long gone by. One hears no more of such heroes as Donohue or Walmsley, who had at their backs organized bands strong enough in men and arms, and horses when they wanted them, to sustain pitched battles with the military and police; carrying with them a regular commissariat of cattle and sheep, levied from the settlers too weak to resist the foray; washing down good beef and mutton with rum, wine, and tea, rifled at the pistol's point from travelling drays; smoking tobacco quite mild enough for

the taste and character of the consumers, from the same gratis source; and gambling, like devils, among themselves for the shares of the plunder. It sounds like a jolly life. Without much more risk to the neck than is necessary to make fox-hunting charming, what wonder that it should have been popular?

"For the benefit of country gentlemen," it may be well to give at this place a definition of the term Bush-ranger. This cannot be more concisely done than in the words of the Act of Council passed for the suppression of such criminals, intituled—"An Act to facilitate the apprehension of transported felons and offenders illegally at large, and of persons found with arms and suspected to be robbers." He is, in short, a runaway convict, desperate, hopeless, fearless; rendered so, perhaps, by the tyranny of a gaoler, of an overseer, or of a master to whom he has been assigned. In colonial phrase, "he takes to the bush."

I well remember the confused notions I had in early boyhood somehow imbibed regarding these people. Devouring with more appetite than discrimination all books of travel and adventure, real or fictitious, and making a geographical hash of the Cape of Good Hope and Botany Bay, bush-rangers, bushmen, and boschmen, were in my eyes one class—namely, armed savages, pillaging and preying upon the white settlers; and the bush in which they ranged was a fac-simile of the gooseberry and currant beds at home—only of wider extent. I wonder if children of the present day have any clearer view of a subject which interests them and their teachers so very remotely!

When bush-ranging was at its zenith, twenty or thirty years ago, the gaol-bird who could make certain (almost to a given day) of flitting over the prison walls, and the chain-gang desperado who found means to break his bonds, were in possession of sufficient "office"* to enable them to go straight to the bush-rendezvous of some noted leader, where they commonly fell into the enjoyment of "a short life and a merry one," greatly detrimental to the honester part of the community, and terminating naturally in the policeman's bullet or the hangman's hemp.

In the heart of Sydney, the ancient quarter called "The Rocks" is well known to have been, and still to be, the general intelligence department of that numerous class in New South Wales which might be styled the predatory. There the murderer and burglar found, and yet finds, customers for his "swag" in the professional "fence," or receiver of stolen goods, and a safe asylum for a time from the efforts of an inefficient police.

The Rangers of Her Majesty's forests in New South Wales are, of course, well informed in all matters likely to put money within easy reach. Travellers about to start are placed under close but not obvious surveillance. A good haul is sometimes got from the periodical payments of provincial publicans' licences through the post-office to the colonial treasury, the time and channel of remittance being well known to those chiefly concerned, namely, the bush-rangers.

A settler goes to a neighbouring town, or fair, sells a horse or two, some pigs, or produce; he goes home

* Information.

rejoicing, and delivers the money to his wife, at whose hands, the very next morning, when the good-man is gone to his work, a couple of crape-faced fellows demand the price of the property disposed of on their account. Simple farmers or labourers, with six months' wages in their pockets, incautiously "flash" their money at pot-houses, the very head-quarters of bush-ranging plots. The landlord cannot afford to be squeamish, however suspicious he may be of the quality of some of his guests. The half-drunken betrayer of the state of his purse is watched, waylaid, and quickly relieved of all trouble as to the investment of his gains.

The grand desideratum of the robbery is, of course, cash; but cheques and orders, which are constantly and necessarily passing between the interior and the capital, are readily negotiated. Paper, for the most trifling sums, is current in the provinces, like "shin-plasters" in America. A great many more of these flimsy representatives of bullion than are really requisite are issued. It is averred, and that without contradiction, that certain large proprietors make a practice of paying wages by orders written purposely on small and thin scraps of paper, and that they pocket many hundreds a-year by the loss or destruction of these fragile liabilities in the hands of rough, careless, and unsober characters.

The character of the Australian bush-ranger of former days was invested with something of the dignity accorded to the terrible Buccaneer of the American coasts, the gallant Caballero del Camino of Castile and Mexico; nay, even of that ballet-and-tableau-and-fancy-ball-darling, the silver-buttoned, ribboned, and gartered

bandit of the Apennines. His business was so profitable that, like some of the more elevated highwaymen of the old country and olden times, (when, to ride over Hounslow Heath, or Finchley Common, after dusk, was to be robbed,) the bush-ranger of mark and likelihood could occasionally afford to be magnanimous. Not that magnanimity was his generic peculiarity. If generosity and humanity were not the leading attributes of the old English robber, who sometimes wore a bag-wig and steel buttons on his velvet coat, it becomes a logical consequence that the doubly-distilled desperado of Botany Bay was not the man to do much to raise the character of the trade. In the present days, at any rate, there is nothing of the romantic or chivalrous in the annals of Australian bush-ranging. The modern newspapers, on the contrary, teem with petty and cowardly robberies of the poor, and the old, and the defenceless; hard-working operatives cruelly beaten and robbed of every copper, and every rag of clothing; half-drunken pedlars with gutted packs and hamstrung horses, or some helpless, feckless old woman rifled, and rumpled, and left with her "petticoats cut all round about," and without a glimmering in the world how or by whom, or when, where, or why, it all happened.

Even now, however, half a dozen times a year, some frightful, sweeping and barbarous outrage fills the columns of the public journals, and reminds one how deeply the old felon infusion has poisoned the corporate mass. So lately as September, 1850, when travelling with my family along this same mountain road, we found on the walls of every inn a Government notice,

offering a reward of 50*l.* "to any free person, or a pardon to any prisoner of the Crown, who would give such information as might lead to the apprehension and conviction of one Henry Carroll," on charges of robbery with violence, and of rape.*

Several other rather red-handed gentry were known to be "illegally at large" at the same period; yet the rich squatters and landowners, members of council, and others, travelled quite unconcernedly in their carriages, on horseback, or by the mail, most of them making a point never to carry any fire-arms nor money more than sufficient to buy off a broken head if stopped. All hotel bills are payed by cheques,—a prudent plan for more reasons than one. It is notorious, that when highway robbery was rife in Europe, inn-keepers often connived at the practice, and, indeed, played into the hands of the gentlemen of the road. I am far from asserting that such is the case in New South Wales at present; but many of the roadside lonely hostelries are kept by persons who have been prisoners; and in all of them there are servants, often in places of the highest trust, still serving their sentence on tickets-of-leave, in whom the chink of a fat bag of sovereigns, or a glimpse of a plethoric pocket-book, might re-awaken dormant propensities.

Experienced travellers, moving singly, are not in the habit, as I have said, of carrying weapons, because their

* In November, 1850, the Sydney *Morning Herald* reported that a man, supposed to be this Carroll, had been taken by the police at Carcoar, but had again escaped, leaving his horse and bridle in the hands of one of the constables.

display is apt to provoke maltreatment, and they can rarely be used with effect, seeing that the wearer is usually taken by surprise at some convenient spot, and has no time for preparation. As for carrying money, "Cantabit vacuus," &c. is a good motto for the traveller. For myself, when not travelling in so much state as on the present Vice-regal progress, I took but little cash, but there lay within reach a double-barrelled pistol on which I could rely; and, in very ugly spots, motiving an ardent desire for ornithological specimens, I put together my gun, loaded with Eley's swan-shot cartridges, an excellent charge for execution, either in the foreground or middle distance of a "stand and deliver" scene. However, I never met with any obstruction of that nature, and am truly glad of it, for whether the rencounter ended in victory or defeat, in being taken aback or taking the life of a wretch ill prepared for his last account, subsequent reflections could not be otherwise than sore ones.

I find in my notes not a few anecdotes of bush-ranging, most of them orally delivered to me, and will here insert a small selection from my *Collectanea.* But first, and in strict connexion with the subject under notice, let me give a slight sketch of that excellent force, the Mounted Police; a force which has done much good service in the country, especially in the suppression of convict outrages, and which, long before this book can be published, will, through the mistaken parsimony of the Local Legislature, have ceased to exist.

The mounted police force is drawn from the infantry regiments serving in New South Wales. It was first

established in 1825, under the government of Sir Thomas Brisbane, the infant corps consisting of two officers and thirteen troopers only. The numbers, gradually augmenting, reached in 1839 the maximum of 9 officers, 1 sergeant-major, 156 non-commissioned officers and men, and 136 horses, 20 of the troopers being dismounted.

Thus was formed an efficient body of mounted constables, controlled by military discipline, and subject to military law; for, although appointed to serve in the police, they remain as supernumeraries on the roll of their regiments; and on the removal of these regiments from the colony, the men are transferred to the relieving corps. The officers are magistrates. The dress is a neat and serviceable light dragoon uniform; the arms, the sabre, the carbine, and the pistol. The head quarter's division, consisting of the commandant, the adjutant, and about 25 men, is stationed at Sydney, and the officers of divisions are at different inland posts, with small parties on all the main roads.

Many a gallant service was performed by this useful corps. Many a desperate bush-ranger was taken or slain by them; many a formidable banditti broken up, or hunted down until they yielded in despair. Many were the flocks, and herds of cattle, and horses re-captured from the outlaws. Many the murders, and robberies, and outrages on men and women prevented by the terror of their name and neighbourhood. The privations endured by officers and men on these expeditions were very great; great the perseverance and intelligence with which they followed up the tracks of the brigands

through forest, scrub, and swamp, rocky gully, and sandy plain. Sometimes the numerical odds were fearfully against them; but, although crime often fights with desperation, it is seldom successful against cool valour.

The mounted police were, moreover, called into action very frequently against the aboriginal tribes, who, on some occasions, attacked the distant grazing stations, pillaged the premises, speared or drove away the flocks, and even murdered the shepherds and stockmen. In one instance, at least, it is to be feared that forty or fifty of these ignorant but ferocious savages fell under the fire of the troopers. Irritated by one of their sergeants having been treacherously wounded with a spear, they charged into the thick bush, where, out of sight and control of their officers, they took a fearful vengeance on the barbarian foe. Generally, however, in their collisions with the blacks, they behaved with laudable moderation and forbearance. In the case just cited, the party had been sent 300 miles to repel the repeated aggressions of these people, and it had become absolutely necessary to drive them away from the spot where they had committed such outrages.

I could never discover any sustained record of the active services in which this force had been engaged; but I find many complimentary allusions thereto in old books of general orders; a few despatches detailing encounters with robbers; and, as before stated, a good many reached me by oral tradition, some of which I noted down as received.

The following transcript of a report from one of the most dashing officers ever employed in the mounted police to the Governor of the time, Sir Ralph Darling, will bring vividly before the reader's eye the "scenery and machinery" of a conflict between the police corps and a band of bush-rangers. The stage whereon it was enacted is situated on the extreme western limits of the colony.

"Lieut. Turner's Farm, Dividing Range,
16th October, 1830.

"SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that I arrived at Warwick on the 9th inst., at which place I was in the hopes of falling in with Lieut. Brown; and at all hazards it was my intention to place myself under the directions of that experienced officer—for whose situation, after the defeat of his five men, I could not help feeling the deepest concern. In this I was disappointed, having been informed that Captain Walpole and himself had crossed the Lachlan River, thirty miles to the westward, on the morning of the 6th.

"On the 10th I took a south-west direction from Warwick, and on the following evening (11th) fell in with that determined and ferocious banditti, near Barona Plains, where a hard contested skirmish took place between them and my party—which at that time consisted of myself, two non-commissioned officers, six privates, and one constable. The banditti were twelve or thirteen in number.

"We were engaged about twenty minutes, the bush-rangers retreating gradually and returning a brisk fire,

keeping themselves dexterously covered by the trees—the worst shots amongst them loading for the best ones.

"This continued until we had driven them back about half-a-mile from the ground they had taken up—when I found that all the ammunition of my party was expended but a few rounds, which I deemed it right to reserve to protect the disabled in the event of the worst consequences.

"I was, therefore, forced to allow the banditti to pursue their retreat, with three of the most desperate of them so severely wounded that they could only retire but a short distance, and with the loss of all their cavalcade of horses, provisions, and other plunder. The three wounded are now under escort to the Goulbourn Plains.

"In this skirmish (which would have terminated in the decisive fall of the banditti if my party had had more ammunition, or if they had exposed themselves as fearlessly as the soldiers) myself received a slight wound in the left thigh, two privates were slightly wounded, one horse killed, and two wounded. I regret to say Constable Daniel Geary was dangerously wounded whilst making a gallant push to support the two right flank men, who were exposed to a sharp fire and in danger of being surrounded. I cannot too strongly recommend this brave man, who is a native of the colony (white), to the consideration of the Governor, should he survive his wound. Indeed, I can say of all my party that no one exceeded another in coolness and courage.

"Captain Walpole came up with me on the morning of the 12th, and not having been able to keep my seat

on horseback, I placed the effective men of my party under his command. He was on the 13th on the tracks of the remainder of the banditti, seven in number, out of their knowledge,* and without a morsel of provisions, and I am hourly expecting to hear of their capture. In fact, they cannot escape.

"This affair will, I trust, put a stop to the unfortunate mania entertained by the convicts in the district of Bathurst; and it ought to convince those misguided people that a less number of soldiers, regularly opposed to them, are always sure to defeat them.

(Signed), "L. MACALISTER,
"Lieut. Mounted Police."

It is only necessary to add, that the whole gang was taken by Capt. Walpole, seven of them having been severely wounded. Just a month before this brilliant bush-battle, Donohue, the most successful as well as the bloodiest malefactor that ever broke bonds, was killed in a determined fight with the police, which had a heavy score to reckon with him.

Not long before his end he had shot dead a young officer, whom he met on horseback and attempted to rob. The unhappy young man, unwilling to be plundered by a single footpad, struck spurs to his horse and attempted to ride over the villain. Donohue, stepping aside and letting him pass onwards, took deliberate aim and shot him through the brain at full speed.

The following incident was related to me by a gentleman well acquainted with the chief actor in this

* *i. e.* not "en pays de connaissance."

remarkable case of capture of a large band of armed convicts by an officer's party of the mounted police.

This gallant officer having, to the surprise of the people and garrison of the town of ——, marched one day, as prisoners to the gaol, a body of bush-rangers three or four times the strength of his own force, was asked by his admiring comrades how he had contrived this sweeping capture with such long odds against him.

The readers of Joe Miller will recollect the Hibernian soldier, who boasted, according to that veracious annalist, that he had made prisoners of a whole section of the enemy, single handed, by surrounding them. Mr. ——, not being an Irishman, did no such impossible thing. Stealing cautiously through the bush, with his little party of four or five men, he espied the banditti, in number about sixteen, busily cooking and eating in a hollow, some thirty yards below where he stood—their arms piled a few paces distant.

Leaving his men above with orders how to act, and creeping down the bank, he suddenly jumped into the midst of the robbers, shouting out, "Yield in the King's name, ye bog-trotting villains!" Then, looking up towards his party, "Send down," cried he, "two file to secure the arms; stand fast the remainder, and shoot the first man that moves." About twenty stand of arms were thus taken possession of, handcuffs were applied as far as they would go, and, incredible as it may appear, the disarmed banditti, with their teeth drawn, were safely conducted by their captor to the neighbouring township.

A medical gentleman, long resident in the colony, related to me a lamentable case, which fell under his professional cognisance.

A young officer of the commissariat, on a visit to a friend near Liverpool, a town about twenty miles from Sydney, had just left the house on horseback, when three armed men rushed out of a thicket and ordered him to stand. Intuitively he lashed his horse and sprung forwards—when the leader of the robbers fired his piece, the ball entering behind the ear and coming out at the corner of the eye of the unfortunate young man. He fell, and after wandering about all night, blinded with agony and half dead with cold, was luckily discovered by his friends. Although his life was by skilful treatment saved, he entirely lost his sight: nor was fortune yet tired of persecuting the sufferer. So soon as he was well enough to move, he was provided with a passage in the ship *Cumberland*, for England. This vessel, it is supposed, was captured by pirates on the voyage. Nothing ever transpired regarding her fate, except that some articles of sea-gear, marked with her name, were seen in a buccaneering boat, the crew of which had boarded another vessel.

It is gratifying to know that in this case the villains had no long impunity. An active magistrate of the district, with only the chief constable to assist him, put himself instantly on their traces. Knowing the features of the country well, they looked out for the smoke of a fire in the bush, for the weather was unusually cold. The expected vapour was soon seen to rise above the trees on the border of a creek. In less than twenty-four

hours after the shot was fired, the magistrate pounced upon the ruffians; and not very long afterwards they were hanged at Liverpool.

Whilst on a visit at ——, the Messrs. ——, who are natives of the colony, informed me that, in their numerous journeys through the bush, over a period of thirty or forty years, they had never but once fallen in with bush-rangers. It occurred as follows: the two brothers, with an old gentleman, a friend of theirs, were riding together unarmed, but accompanied by some dogs, when the elder brother saw two men, one carrying a musket the other a bundle, dive into the bush on the road side. He told his companions, but they thought he was mistaken. However, on reaching the spot, he threw the dogs into covert, and they soon "unkenneled the varmint."

The old gentleman, who, it appears, was, like many old gentlemen, of choleric temper, called on them to yield, at the same time pouring upon them a torrent of abusive epithets and closing upon them with his horse. "Stand back, and keep a civil tongue in your head, or I'll blow out your brains!" exclaimed the man with the musket; "I don't want to hurt you, if you let me alone; but I'll have some of your lives if you meddle with me!" Mr. ——, then addressing them mildly but firmly, advised them to surrender, as the gentlemen were determined to capture them. He pointed to two stockkeepers who were near at hand to assist, if necessary, and reminded the musketeer that his shot could only kill one of their party, and that the murder would make his case worse.

"Have you any fire-arms about you?" demanded the sturdy footpad; "if you have not, I can't and won't surrender. I'm an old soldier; fought through the Peninsula; and I'm d——d if I strike to an inferior force!"

Mr. —— replied that they had no fire-arms, but could get them in a few minutes.

"Produce them, and I will give in," was the rejoinder; "that will be an honourable capitulation."

Meanwhile the man with the bundle had been secured, and placed in charge of a shepherd who came up, and a mounted stockman rode off for the stipulated fire-arms, the old soldier-robber remaining doggedly at bay.

Unfortunately, during this interval the peppery old gentleman recommenced his vituperation, upon which the other, swearing a terrible oath, cocked his piece and pointed it at his head, when Mr. —— spurred his horse upon the robber, and threw him to the ground. He recovered himself actively, however, placed his back against a tree, and, coming down to the "Prepare for cavalry," showed once more an impracticable front; then suddenly rising, he was in the act of falling back into the woods to escape, when, the accession of force necessary to dignify the act of laying down his arms arriving, this stickler for the honour of the army permitted himself to be made a prisoner of war without further resistance.

A clever and spirited capture of an armed highwayman was made by a retired military officer in 1849, on the mountains we are now traversing. This gentleman was travelling alone in his gig, when a policeman coming up informed him that he was searching for an armed

bush-ranger who had robbed one or two persons near the spot. Upon this the major, having borrowed a large horse-pistol from the constable, placed it behind his gig-apron, and drove on his way.

A solvent looking gentleman, solus in a buggy, is the very thing for a highwayman; and accordingly he had not proceeded half a mile, before, sure enough, a horseman galloped up from the rear, passed ahead, then suddenly pulling up, commanded him to deliver his money. The gallant traveller instantly plucked out his pistol, and, without more ado, let fly at the robber's head, who fell heavily to the ground from his saddle.

The major thought him dead; but to make all safe, he jumped out, and tied his hands behind him. This job was hardly completed when the bush-ranger recovered his senses; and his captor, who at this time was neither so young nor so strong as when he learnt the goose-step forty years before, had the satisfaction to find that his prisoner was alive and well, a remarkably fine athletic young fellow, and likely to have proved a Tartar had not his horse thrown him by shying at the report of the pistol. The same report being heard by the policeman, he quickly reappeared upon the scene of action; and this clumsy practitioner in the profession of Dick Turpin was safely carried off to a place of confinement.

"Dans les malheurs de nos meilleurs amis il y a toujours quelque chose qui ne nous déplait pas," writes the great French maxim-monger; nor could I help laughing in the face of a respected colonial friend of mine, when he confided to me how, as he was once upon a time gigging along this unblest mountain road, he was

mulcted by bush-rangers, not only of his portmanteau, but of all his raiment then in wear, except his shirt and drawers; and, being of a philosophic turn of mind, he was congratulating himself that matters were no worse, when the robbers, who had left him, returned, and, begging his pardon, said that in their hurry they had forgotten his hat, which they accordingly took, and once more departed.

The reader may laugh, if he likes, at my next anecdote. A gentleman whom I met at Bathurst, and who is well known in the colony for his humorous qualities, was stopped on a bush-road by a rough fellow, who, rushing upon him, thrust the muzzle of a pistol into the pit of his stomach, roaring out at the same time, "Stand, you ——, or I'll blow out your brains!"—"My good fellow," retorted Mr. P——, with perfect self-possession — "you won't find my brains down there!" The ruffian laughed heartily at the joke, and treated, as well as robbed, the joker with a degree of tenderness and civility very foreign to his usual habits of doing business.

I cannot omit the following characteristic incident in the bush-ranging line, which was related to me by the driver of one of the inland mails:—

During that period of the history of the colony when highway robbery was an everyday affair, he was driving from Windsor to Sydney with several passengers—one of whom on the box was well armed—when, at the foot of a hill, they came upon the body of a man lying upon its face in the middle of the road. "A case of robbery and murder!" remarked the passenger; and

the coachman, impelled by Samaritan feelings, drew up his team, and was in the act of descending to see if life still remained in the plundered stranger, when "Bail up—or you're dead men!" resounded from behind a thick tree, through a fork of which a double-barreled gun covered the driver's head; whilst at the same moment the couchant bandit—for such he proved to be—sprung to his feet, turned the leaders across the pole of the carriage, and had his blunderbuss at the armed passenger's breast before he could get out his pistols.

The coachman was then compelled to take his horses off, the passengers were ordered severally to get out and to "bail up"—like cows prepared for milking—at the fence-side; their pockets were rifled, the mail-bags were slit open, and letters containing money extracted; and finally the carriage was permitted to proceed with its impoverished freight—minus, moreover, its leaders, which were required to carry the footpads to some chosen hiding-place distant from the scene of their exploit. The armed passenger, it appears, was roughly treated. Getting away with whole limbs, he got away with inexpressible discomfort to his nether ones; for the weather was inclement, and the bigger of the two brigands, complimenting him on his being "a tall fellow like himself," borrowed his trowsers, putting them on over his own, and leaving him to pursue his journey not only "poor," but bare "indeed."

I close the subject of bush-ranging with the following inscription engraved on a mural tablet in St. James's church, Sydney. I have been too long from school to

be able to judge of its Latinity—although there does appear to be an unlucky jumble of datives and ablatives; but the epitaph tells in a few words the touching tale of sisterly anguish over a brother's bloody death:—

ROBERTO WARDELL, LL D.

A LATRONE VAGANTE

OCCISO

A D 1834—ÆTATE SUO 41

SORORIS

In the words "Latrone vagante," the unlearned reader gets a tolerably literal translation of the term bush-ranger. I believe this unfortunate gentleman met his end in a rash attempt to apprehend single-handed a desperate and well-armed robber on his own estate.

During the five years of my residence in the neighbourhood of "Botany Bay" I was only once robbed—to my knowledge. But this instance was somewhat remarkable, for it occurred to me in the open day, with my sword by my side, and in the house of God. The sacrilegious rascal displayed some knowledge of human and male nature in the mode he acted. As I passed with the crowd down the aisle to leave the church, I became aware of a man trying to push his way between me and my wife. I jostled him in return—which was precisely what he wanted. Suffice it to say, that when I put my hand in my pocket to take out my mite for the church-door plate—my purse was absent without leave.

If a certain correspondent in 1850 of the "Sydney

Herald" is to be believed—and my own experience bears out his statement,—there exists in the purlieus of Sydney a juvenile school for bush-rangers, which bids fair to keep the trade well supplied with professors.

The young idlers of the town form themselves into gangs, and take up positions on the roads leading to the city from the bush. Here they waylay and rob smaller boys, or weaker parties, of their "five corners," a wild berry of the scrub, "according to the most skilful methods of highway robbery. A knife is held out, and under threats and oaths that would disgrace Norfolk Island, the juniors are compelled to *dub up*, or are seized and robbed by force."

I myself witnessed, and enacted Quixotte in an act of puerile bush-ranging precisely of the above nature—a case of "robbery with violence." "Hurrah for the Road!" is the motto of these promising youngsters.

It is too late, I fear, to apologise for digressions. Indeed the word "Rambles" in my title-page was adopted advisedly, and intended to apply equally to pen and person.

CHAPTER VI.

GOVETT'S LEAP — VICTORIA PASS — HARTLEY — HASSAN'S WALLS — LOYAL MOUNTAINEERS—SLY GROG-SHOP—A MOUNTAIN GENERAL EMPORIUM—A MOUNTAIN STULTZ — THE LAUGHING JACKASS — DROUGHT AND DEAD CATTLE — "THE SOLITARY CREEK" — MOUNT LAMBEY — A CONVICT'S REVENGE—DESCENT TO THE PLAINS—MACQUARIE PLAINS—BATHURST—A DUSTY DEPUTATION—THE GAOL AND A GAOL-BIRD—SPIRITUAL DESTITUTION AND SPIRITUOUS PLENTY.

ABOUT two miles from Blackheath is the scenic "lion" to which I have before made allusion—namely, Govett's Leap. Under the guidance of Captain Bull, soon after our arrival at Blackheath, some of our party went to visit the spot.

Pushing our way for half an hour with no little labour through the thick and dark forest, suddenly a bright though filmy expanse of sun-lit air appeared through the close-growing trees, and in the next instant we stood on a bare rocky shelf, looking into and over a magnificent basin scooped among the mountains—about five miles across and perhaps a thousand feet in depth. The bottom of this wide and profound abyss is so densely overgrown with wood, that not a speck of earth is visible from above.

Its flanks are formed of precipitous cliffs crowned with timber and perpendicular as a wall. Through ver-

tical clefts in these the sun shot its sidelong rays, right across the dark gulph, upon the Leap or Cataract—a slender thread of water which, hanging from the rim of the bowl, seemed to wave in the wind, the slightest breeze dissipating it into mere mist. A stronger gush occurred now and then, but the thin stream never appeared to reach the depths below. Australian waterfalls are indeed but sorry affairs. I fancy there are very few, if any, permanent ones.

As to the name of the place I could gather nothing further than that it was first discovered by one Mr. Govett, a surveyor; but whether this gentleman took a literal or only a poetical jump into his own punchbowl did not transpire. It is certainly one of the grandest freaks of nature I have seen in any country—quite beyond the power of pen or pencil to delineate. I have seen an attempt by the most talented artist in the colony to transfer this scene to canvass. It is a fine picture, but not "Govett's Leap!"

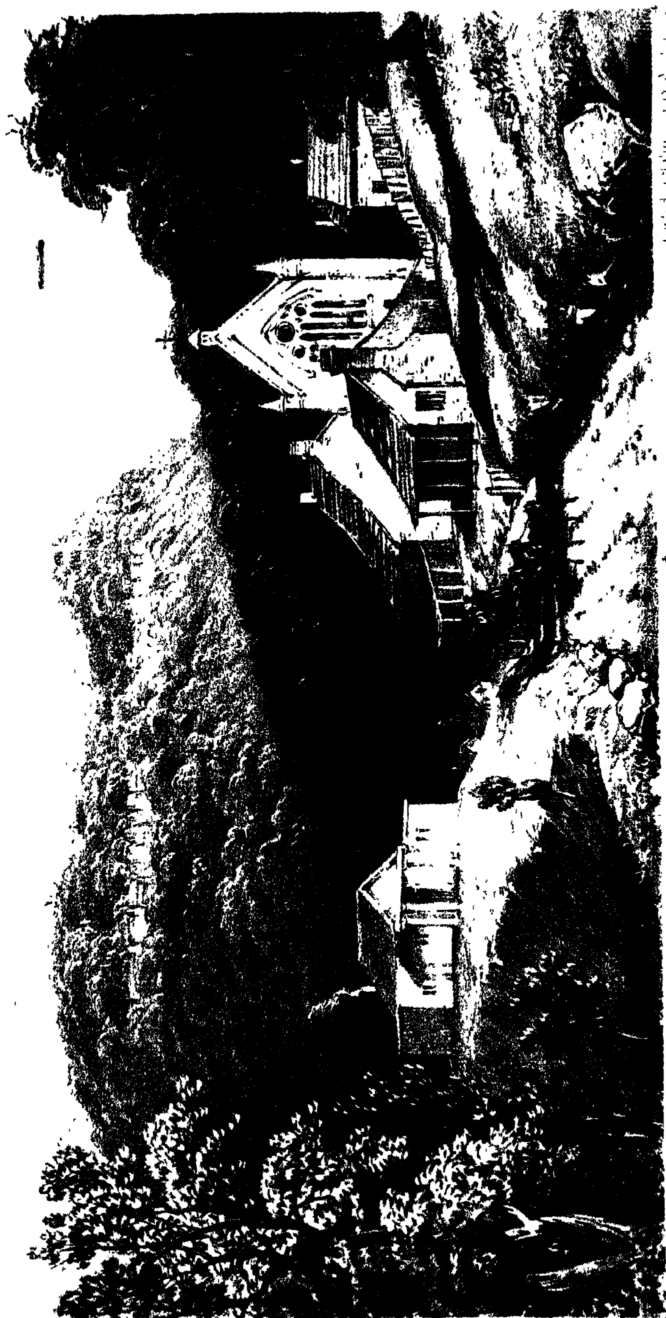
One very striking effect of thus breaking out of the forest gloom upon such a landscape is the beautifully clear and opaline tint of the atmosphere—an effect due perhaps to the transparent purity of the air in this climate and these altitudes; for Blackheath is nearly 4,000 feet above the sea.

In the bush around we found the Warătah growing in great perfection. Its noble crimson cone, shaped like a large artichoke, crowns a straight stem of hard wood from five to ten feet high, clothed with an oak-like leaf. This majestic wild-flower is well entitled to be called the Queen of the Bush.

I saw here for the first time the black cockatoo, which, in a flock of about twenty, kept screaming at us as long as we were in sight. This handsome bird is as large and as black as a crow, with a fine crest, and a long fan-tail beautifully striped, sometimes with scarlet, sometimes with orange bars. He is very shy, and in no instance has been domesticated.

Pursuing our journey from Blackheath in the afternoon, a few miles brought us to Sir Thomas Mitchell's *chef d'œuvre* in road-engineering, the Victoria Pass. At two points on the summit the narrow parapeted ridge looks on either hand sheer down into deep bush valleys of immense extent, beyond which range after range of wooded mountains blend at length with the clouds in the indistinct distance. Were there, as in Switzerland, shining lakes and snowy peaks added to this landscape—the finest by far in the Blue Mountains—I know of nothing that could surpass it in wild beauty. The valley on the left looked dark, desolate, and wholly uninhabited; on the right lay the smiling Vale of Clywd and the little township of Hartley, upon which the road drops as gently as could possibly be contrived by human art.

Ere we reached this highland hamlet we came upon a considerable body of horsemen, who, saluting his Excellency with loud and hearty cheers, so astonished our horses, if not ourselves, as nearly to drive the whole cavalcade over the precipice. In a cloud of dust, and with wild huzzas, they closed round us and bore us away to the Court-house, where the usual duel of address and reply was instantly and warmly engaged in by the authorities of the place and the Governor. As we drove down



the hill, with our loyal and uproarious escort galloping alongside, an individual spurring at my elbow suddenly disappeared, horse and man, over the edge of a rude bridge into the watercourse below. Not one of his townsmen pulled up—no one even looked behind; my servant however dropped from the carriage and ran to his assistance. The indifference of his companions was at once explained. He was only a negro!

The Court-house and Catholic chapel of Hartley are prettily situated. My sketch was taken from a spot just beyond these objects.

Our attention and admiration were next arrested by Hassan's Walls—an immense crescent of crags naturally castellated, four or five hundred feet high, towering above the forest, and frowning grimly down upon the road which winds round their base. Here are rampart and bastion, buttress and barbican, of nature's own building—the perfectly horizontal character of the strata and the cubic form of the blocks of stone, making the resemblance to ruined fortifications extremely striking. Had I been travelling in Hindostan, I should not have doubted that it was some hill fort we were approaching, and I should have expected to hear the clangour of gongs and the braying of shawms, and to have seen a brave cavalcade of elephants and camels, with the glittering of steel casques, the fluttering of gay pennons, and all the pomp of Oriental panoply, winding downwards through the umbrageous jungle.

Hassan's Walls are, in outline, not unlike Gwalior; but the latter formidable fortress is situated in a plain. Who was Hassan? and whence the Moslem

and Byronic name?—We got no answer from the echoes! At one extremity of the "walls," there stands an isolated pillar of rock, known by travellers as the Duke's Head.

Not far from this spot, at a little wayside tavern, with two or three cottages near it, where we did not stop, a party of women and children came forward, smiling and curtseying, and carrying arms and aprons full of flowers, which they threw before the Governor's carriage—a sight we hardly expected to see among the wild recesses of the Blue Mountains.

Not so pleasing a feature, although a characteristic one, was the scene occurring in a small hut a little further on. A drunken man and his wife, or more likely his concubine, equally drunk, were swearing and fighting, with bloody faces, over their cups; they rushed out and gave us a maniacal shout as we passed. This was what is called a "sly grog-shop," where all sorts of liquors are drunk without licence, and all sorts of ruffians get drunk "on the premises" with every kind of licence. There was a still, perhaps, on the hill side, not far off.

We passed this day through large tracts of country of the most dreary and most unavailable character; yet here and there were very grand and even lovely peeps of distance through the trees. At length—and indeed it was a hard day's work in weather so hot and roads so dusty and rough—at length, shortly after dusk, we came in sight of Binning's Inn, which we approached through a triumphal arch of foliage and flowers, while fireworks fizzed and cracked their compliments to the Viceroy and his lady.

This inn is decidedly the best on the line, with active and obliging people, good plain cookery and clean beds. Doubtless, the foreknowledge of the Governor's visit had produced along the road no little furbishing and refitting of the mountain taverns; for we found humble but successful attempts at neatness and comfort in almost all of them; although, if I recollect right, a fair and clever, but somewhat severe writer, my predecessor by a few years, has condemned them wholesale as a parcel of filthy dens.

In some of the Australian houses of entertainment, and particularly those far inland, it has indeed occasionally been my fate to be allotted a very small and very hard bed, more thickly peopled than was pleasant —the blankets with insects, the chaff paliasse with mice; a soup-plate, a milk-jug, and one small cotton rag, for basin, ewer, and towelry; a public hair-brush and comb, that looked as if they had curried bullock-drivers for a whole summer; and a looking-glass grimly corrective of personal conceit. In one pothouse on this journey, I was the successor to a stout and cross gentleman, who, I fear, had been turned out of his room on my account, for he growled exceedingly as he removed a very tiny travelling-bag and an enormous pair of slippers, both of carpet,—the latter article of outfit absorbing twice as much Kidderminster as the former. But in general we found all prepared for us; plenty of clean white dimity and huckaback, water and brown Windsor. A requisition for a matutinal tub did, indeed, in the minds of some hosts and hostesses, produce as much surprise and speculation as though some act of

necromancy were the object in view; and at the smaller taverns, so little were the worthy people prepared for this particular demand, that there was always a severe run upon the stable-buckets.

But, after all, this is not an Australian peculiarity. In England itself—clean and comfortable England—the traveller (sometimes the visitor) who habitually practises what may be called general ablution, is too often stigmatized by the race of chambermaid, house-maid, and housekeeper, as "a nasty, dirty man, always messing and slopping about!"

Mr. Binning is a sculptor and stonemason by trade. He possesses several hundred acres of land, and a capital stone-built private residence, apart and on the opposite side of the road from the tavern. I heard the sound of a piano from within the drawing-room curtains of the former, and was told that the young ladies were practising with the governess who lives with them.

18*th November*.—To Mr. William Lawson's, of Macquarie Plains,—about 32 miles.

We were up and off "with the first cock." It was a beautiful morning, cool almost to coldness. A light haze in the hollows was soon dispelled by the sun, which, travelling the same way with ourselves, never gave us much annoyance until after midday. Then, indeed, he confronted us, and we all wore "his burnished livery" ere the journey was over. Early in the morning, when the dew is yet on the leaf, a peculiarly aromatic odour arises from the gum-forest. Sometimes I have fancied the scent resembled that of cloves, of mace, or of pepper; but that of camphor is very general. These balmy and

spicy exhalations from the "medicinal gum," so different from those of other hot climates where the soil is richer and the vegetation rankly abundant, must be a healthful ingredient of the air we breathe.

I have heard prophets of evil foretel that the rapid increase of European and deciduous plants in and around Sydney, and the proposed formation of water reservoirs in its vicinity, and in that of all the larger towns, will in time produce epidemic disease. It will take, I conjecture, a good many "falls of the leaf" to make the sands of Sydney a subsoil: but on the other hand, if a population of 50,000 persons are permitted to herd together much longer in such a climate without a thorough underground drainage, it requires no inspiration to predict that, sooner or later, they will be decimated by some sweeping malady.

It was, as I have said, a beautiful morning: the aspect of the country too became more smiling. In place of the eternal sandstone, the granite with its glittering mica was now the prevailing rock. The trees were larger and not so closely set; and the undulating slopes were covered with tolerably good grass. Here was to be seen a herd of sheep browsing straight a-head according to their wont—lingering where the pasture was abundant, and nibbling at a trot across tracts that, having been lately burnt, were thinly covered with nice young shoots of grass. A tail-less colley gathered, unbidden, a troop of frisking lambs from under our carriage-wheels; while the shepherd lay lazily supine, reading "Bentley's Miscellany"—as I was near enough to perceive. Far below the road, near the

water-courses, we descried here and there the variegated skins of a herd of cattle sheltering themselves under the dark shade of the Casuarinas. It was a decided improvement in external nature.

I felt strong and well and joyous—having left Sydney in other mood of mind and body; and I thought that he must be of morose or obtuse temperament who failed to relish a journey like this—and with such a companion (I must add) as him who sat by my side.

Uniting the freshness and buoyancy of youth, with the acquirements and experience of middle age, and a stock of general information, the fruits of an onerous and responsible post, I had at once a tutor and a playmate in this prince of colonial secretaries and good fellows!

"Toujours gum-tree!" exclaimed he this morning as we plunged for another day's work into the eternal avenue of Eucalyptus, called the Bathurst road—"Toujours, toujours gum-tree!"—But the tiresome monotony of the bush did not affect our spirits. On the contrary, that same bush often rang with our laughter as we pushed along our good steeds, "Punch" and "Merryman," exchanging anecdotes and reciprocating light nonsense.

It does not take much to make a man laugh when his health is good and his heart is light. We laughed at a notice stuck up on a painted board by the road side, threatening prosecution with the utmost rigour "to any person trespassing on this property"—the country for twenty miles round looking as innocently unpeopled and primeval as when it first emerged from chaos!

We laughed at the pompous inscription, "General Store and Provision Warehouse," scrawled in white-wash over the door of a wretched little bark hovel, where were exposed for sale on a sheet of the same material, a cabbage-tree hat or two, a few bottles of ginger beer, a tumbler full of bulls' eyes and lollipops, and half a dozen shrivelled oranges. Nor did we look particularly grave while deciphering with difficulty the abstruse sentence, "Tailor and Habitmaker," chalked on a plank which was nailed against a tree, above an equally small and solitary shieling, perfectly out of humanity's reach, and more particularly of any human being entitled to wear a habit. But we laughed, "holding both our sides," when at the "Solitary Creek," where we stopped for breakfast, we heard (myself for the first time,) the ludicrous song of the "Laughing Jackass."

It is no uncommon thing for a writer to pronounce an object to be utterly indescribable, and forthwith to set to work to describe it. I must try my hand at a description of this absurd bird's chaunt, although no words can possibly do him justice.

He commences, then, by a low cackling sound, gradually growing louder, like that of a hen in a fuss. Then, suddenly changing his note, he so closely imitates Punch's penny-trumpet that you would almost swear it was indeed the jolly "roo-to-to-too" of that public favourite you heard. Next comes the prolonged bray of an ass, done to the life; followed by an articulate exclamation, apparently addressed to the listener, sounding very like "Oh what a Guy!" And the

whole winds up with a suppressed chuckle, ending in an uproarious burst of laughter, which is joined in by a dozen others hitherto sitting silent. It is impossible to hear with a grave face the jocularities of this feathered jester. In spite of all reasoning I could never help feeling that it was myself he was quizzing!

The Laughing Jackass, or *Dacelo gigantea*, is a large species of woodpecker, black and grey in colour, with little or no tail, and an enormously disproportionate head and bill — a most ugly and eccentric-looking fellow.

During the last two days we saw and heard many things not so suggestive of merriment, and these chiefly caused by the crowning and fatal failing of the country —the want of water.

The road was strewed with the rotting carcasses and the bleached skeletons of draught bullocks, which had fallen victims to the drought and to the cruelty of their brutal drivers. We saw them dead or dying in the yokes of the teams; in the water-holes into which they had rushed in a fury of thirst: the dingo sneaked away from his foul feast at every resting-place. Some were sticking fast in the muddy pools, too weak to extricate themselves, and no one had been merciful enough to spare a bullet to put an end to their sufferings. All the ordinary watering-places were nearly dry, trodden into a consistency resembling pea-soup.

I shall never forget the rapture of our party — man and horse—after toiling twenty-one miles without

seeing a drop of water, at the appearance of a beautiful spring of the perfectly pellucid element in an arched grotto of rock by the road-side — nearly the only instance, I believe I may say, that I ever met with in my Australian travels of any such provision at the hands of man. With the ten thousand convict power employed on this great road, fine covered tanks might easily have been cut in the rock at many points where springs are now losing themselves in the sand.

Lamentable accounts, too, reached us of the pastoral districts. No rain, and therefore no grass; cattle and sheep dying of famine, or driven off in flocks and herds to the newly discovered resource of the grazier—the boiling-down establishment, to be converted into tallow; lambs knocked on the head as soon as dropped because there was no "feed" for their dams and themselves. A herd of fat cattle, intended for the Sydney market, was sold on the road on account of the want of grass and water for their subsistence in their journey down. Divided into three lots their prices were as follows:—The best lot at 2*l*. 10*s*. per head; the second at 1*l*. 10*s*.; and the third lot, consisting of forty good beasts, were sold for 30*l*. collectively.

I cannot but think that the camel, so patient of thirst, and the mule and ass so much more independent of water than the horse or ox, might be advantageously introduced into this country for the purposes of draught and carriage. I believe there are three or four of the former animals near Melbourne, and the Australian Agricultural Company have a train of mules. In

Sydney you might as well expect to meet an elephant as either of these useful beasts.

"Solitary Creek," where we stopped to breakfast, is indeed well named. A lonely house, "The Woodman's Inn," is situated in a dreary hollow among the hills, with a small clearing at its rear, through which meanders—in wet weather—the brook whence its name. At present the "Creek" is indeed "solitary," for it has not even its ordinary companion, water.

We found here a portly but keen-looking old landlord, with a pretty young wife, who gave us a tolerable breakfast. We congratulated ourselves, however, at not being compelled to stay a night in such gloomy and unpromising quarters; the more so when it was whispered to me—perhaps by a prejudiced informant—that the head of the establishment was an "old hand," and "as big a rogue as any on the mountain—and that's saying a good deal."

"Solitary Creek" is just the locality for a tale of robbery and murder, such as in early boyhood made one's flesh creep, one's eyes grow round, and one's hair to stand an end at the will of the narrator. The belated and lonely traveller with lame and stumbling steed perceives, at length, through the obscurity of the night and of the forest, the welcome glimmer of a light. He knocks impatiently at the door, in opening which there is some delay, and confusion is heard within. He is admitted, of course, by a withered crone. A tall black-a-vised man is sleeping or feigning sleep on an oak-settle by the fire. Then comes the supper. Worn out with fatigue, after having swallowed some food he

wishes to retire, and, as he is guided to his bedroom by the beldame, a young girl passes through the kitchen and seems to lift a finger to him with a gesture of warning. The sleeping apartment is large and unfurnished, except with a low couch in one corner. He throws himself upon it in his clothes. He cannot sleep. He rises, relumes the lamp, and scrutinises certain stains on the floor at which his dog is smelling. Amid the roaring of the wind through the forest, and the heavy plash of the rain drops, he fancies he hears suppressed voices under his casement. He finds the room-door bolted outside. Overpowered, however, by fatigue and by an unaccountable drowsiness, he again approaches the bed, and is about once more to consign himself to sleep, when his faithful dog seizes him by the tunic and drags him furiously back! A sound as of machinery is now heard—and, aghast with horror, the traveller sees the bed sinking slowly through the floor into a dark vault beneath. Another instant, and three or four brigands throw themselves upon it, and drive their poniards into the—bolster!

Some such dream as this—suggested by I know not what recollections—did indeed haunt my pillow when, two or three years later, fate decided that I should sleep at this dismal hostelry. New faces were there. They tried their best to make me comfortable, and nothing more disastrous or more romantic befel me than a severe biting by fleas and their fellows.

The landlord of the Woodman's Inn complained bitterly of the ravages of native dogs on his poultry-yard and piggery. He had often seen them in packs

of forty and fifty at the creeks early in the morning; and he believed that they feed chiefly on the kangaroos which abound in the neighbouring rocky dells. He had found a remedy against the wild dogs, by keeping tame ones of a fierce, swift, and powerful breed,—one of which, a splendid animal, half mastiff half greyhound, he assured me would go out of his own accord and of malice prepense, accompanied by a small cur which hunted by scent, and would not only kill, but bring home the dead dingo.

Immediately beyond Solitary Creek the road begins to climb, or rather is dragged by the resolute will of the engineer, right over the summit of Mount Lambey —one of the highest peaks of the Blue Mountains,— a work which earns the hearty curses of every bullock-driver, and the objurgations of every traveller of a higher grade who is compelled to follow the vaulting ambition of its originator. Cut an orange in two—lay one-half of it flat on a plate—then ask yourself is it easier to go round it or over it, and is there any difference in distance?

That Mount Lambey is avoidable we ourselves proved on our return trip, by taking the valley of Piper's Flat. But we were told of a better line than either that has long been known to the mountaineers.

From the summit of Mount Lambey Sir Thomas Mitchell succeeded in intersecting at night the light-house on the heads of Port Jackson—a distance of about ninety miles. To reach the top of this hill we had about five miles of terribly steep and rough ascent—yet hardly more difficult than some other passages we

had encountered and overcome in this toilsome journey. Sometimes at a trot, oftener at a walk, we pushed on "with difficulty and labour hard." Heat, dust, swarms of flies, scarcity of water, jaded horses, rocky steps, broken bridges, deep mud-holes, and awfully yawning precipices, did not prevent "the sportingest Governor that ever I see," (for thus was my distinguished cousin eulogized by a well-known Sydney publican,) from sticking to his box the whole of this tour: nor do I believe that any other individual of the party, gentle or simple, could have got that carriage and those four horses over such an extent of rough and dangerous roads without breakage. (In my humble opinion, his Excellency handles the reins of his government with no less skill, judgment, and temper.)

As to my own vehicle it is not too much to say that scarcely a fragment of its original materials got back to Sydney. One or two of our fractures were of so complicated a nature, that my companion and myself had to contemplate the puzzle for some moment before we could comprehend its details—much less remedy it. I particularly remember one case where the phaeton, plumping suddenly into a hole, the hind wheels actually ran over the fore ones—a mode of "changing front" unheard of in military manœuvres. In choosing a carriage for a rugged journey, low fore-wheels should especially be avoided.

Sir Charles's tool-box was in constant requisition by us; and great was the ingenuity of the mounted policemen, two old bush-hands, in repairing damages with straps, ropes, and poles cut from the roadside.

Somewhat later in our tour, while trotting merrily down a hill not far from Bathurst, we were far from edified by seeing one of our fore-wheels taking an independent and divergent course of its own; and we had hardly time to calculate on the consequences ere they occurred! As a proof of the readiness of resource which necessity imparts to persons of all conditions living in the Bush, Mr. Suttor (who accompanied the party at that moment), on seeing our accident came to our assistance, and from an old boot and an old nail manufactured a couple of new washers and a new linch-pin for the recreant wheel, to such good purpose that it carried us safely to Sydney—about one hundred and twenty miles.

During the journey we passed several spots where the road-gangs had been established in temporary stockades. In one of these there is an excellent stone house, the quarters of the officer of the guard, abandoned to decay; and of the hut village of the prisoners nothing remains but a Stonehenge of tall grey chimneys. These road-gang relics give additional gloom to the dismal character of the mountain scenery. The superintendence of convict stockades was an unseemly duty to be thrust upon an officer of the army. He was a slave driver—a gaoler—a captain of banditti—without the excitement and profits of the post. He had absolute power as a magistrate. The condition of the prisoners depended almost wholly on the disposition of the officer in charge. He could encourage or flog, pet or torment them, according to his temper. He could do worse—namely, leave them to the mercies of

subordinates, convict constables, and others. The consequences may be imagined.

The following instance of vulgar tyranny and its punishment was related to me by a servant who had been a prisoner at the time of the occurrence. In digging the portion of soil allotted as his task, a prisoner of an ironed gang broke in upon an ants' nest of that large and venomous kind called the Lion Ant. Being severely stung he jumped out of the hole. The overseer ordered him to get in again. The man proposed that the nest should be blasted with gunpowder. The overseer repeated his order; the man obeyed, but, tortured by the fierce bites of the insects, he again desisted from his work. Upon this the other seized him and thrust him once more into the ants' nest. The prisoner plied his shovel for a few minutes, but the tempter was busy at his heart; when, suddenly springing out of the hole, he cleft the skull of the overseer with his spade, and killed him on the spot. It is quite needless to add that the perpetrator of this act of "justifiable homicide" was hanged.

From Mount Lambey the general tendency of the road is downwards. We stopped to bait at a little wild-looking inn near "Diamond Swamp." In New South Wales the word swamp is generally significant of good alluvial land, and in the populated parts it is usually found covered with crops of grain instead of the water which originally lay upon it. The numerous dried bogs and waterless lakes of this country give likelihood to the theory that its surface has risen considerably, and is still being thrust upwards from the earth's centre.

Near Sydney, the swamp-grounds in the immediate vicinity of hills of sand fifty feet deep are wonderfully fruitful; one acre is worthless except, perhaps, to make glass of, (when a manufacture of that material shall be opened at Sydney,) while its immediate neighbour lets to market-gardeners for 8*l.* to 10*l.* a-year.

The trees were now larger and fewer in number; the character of the country less rugged. We were leaving rocks and ravines, peaks and precipices, for the swelling moor and curving upland. These, in their turn, gradually subsided like a calming sea, until the hills became gentle undulations, the thickset scrub open glade; and, at length, the troubled ocean of the Blue Mountains rippled out in wavy hillocks upon the smooth and wide expanse of the Bathurst Plains. How must the hearts of the toil-worn explorers have leapt with joy when, bursting from the dense bush of this rough Sierra, their eyes first fell upon the splendid champaign tract below them, containing not less than 50,000 acres of naturally clear land, covered with grass, and with a fine river flowing through the midst! What a God-send, in the truest sense of the word, for the crowded and quickly multiplying flocks and herds, hitherto confined to the sea-ward of the mountains! It was, indeed, a rich reward of a gallant enterprise.

The eldest son of Mr. Lawson, one of the three discoverers, and to whom a large grant of this valuable land was justly awarded by the Government, is to be the Governor's host for a few days.

Looking at the Bathurst Plains merely as a military and migratory stranger, without the slightest vocation

towards "settling," or sheep-farming, I could only contemplate them, at first sight, as affording a pleasant relief from the mental and bodily suffocation always experienced by me in a protracted journey through a thickly wooded country; as a famous *locale* for a gallop highly refreshing after seventy or eighty miles of precipices and gullies; as a likely spot for the production of mutton, humbly imitative of Southdown; and as a promising beat for quail-shooting—for I observed, as we descended rapidly to the level land, many fine patches of grain pretty sure to abound with the only representative of England's agrarian game found in the colony. One ought to be an Australian to appreciate Bathurst Plains as fully as he does. He looks at these very ugly and featureless prairies of scanty pasture land through a *woolly* medium. He "grows" wool, as the term is, and rich at the same time, by dint of these same plains, and others of a like nature—by the natural grasses of the country, in short; his admiration of them is, therefore, quite intelligible. Except in unusually wet seasons, there is little water on them and less verdure. The grass grows in separate tufts like the strawberry plant instead of forming a connected turf, a reddish calcareous earth showing itself through the interstices in some parts, and a black sun-cracked soil in others. A hardy kind of everlasting, with a stiff yellow flower and a minute pink convolvulus mix with the herbage, occupying the places of our daisy and buttercup.

Presently we came in sight of a most extensive crop of the great staple of the colony—WOOL—flourishing on the fat saddles of some two or three thousand sheep,

which, under charge of a shepherd or two, were crawling like white maggots over the distant flats, carrying with them a cloud of dust nearly as dense as if they had been travelling on a turnpike road in the dog-days. Other object there was none, with the exception of a great black eagle, tearing carrion on the edge of a water-hole.

Trotting with a free rein along the natural road, smooth as a race-course—no little treat after three days of cautious driving—a few miles brought us to "Macquarie Plains," the seat (as the Guide-books say) of Mr. William Lawson, where we were most kindly received, and comfortably accommodated. The house looks over a wide extent of the Plains. In its rear are extensive offices, farm-buildings, stock-yards, stables, &c. requisite for one of the largest grazing and breeding establishments in Australia. Detached, at a short distance, is a garden, useful and ornamental, a mixture of the flower and kitchen-garden, full of English productions; roses and other old floral friends in great profusion; cherries, peaches, apricots, apples, pears, and grapes; abundance of fine vegetables, not one of which plants, ornate or esculent, or, indeed, any other that I know of, is indigenous to this originally outlandish and unproductive country. The cherry, by the way, is unknown eastward of the mountains, and never seen in Sydney except in the sophisticated shape of cherry-bounce.*

Besides Mr. Lawson's family, there were several guests at Macquarie Plains; and, although the house is not

* Since this was written, in 1846, the cherry has been induced to grow in Cumberland.

much larger than a moderate country parsonage at home, it was stretched by the hospitality of its owners large enough to contain the whole of the Governor's party, a spacious additional room having been, however, temporarily erected for purposes of refection. In this same room there dined, to meet his Excellency, no fewer than thirty-five ladies and gentlemen, whom the provincial journal described as "a select party of the *élite* of Bathurst," a phrase conveying the idea of an extraordinary degree of social sifting!

Yes, at this Australian country seat, 120 miles from Sydney, at which emporium European supplies arrive, after four or five months' voyage, enhanced nearly double in price, and with the superadded risk, difficulty, and expense consequent on a dray journey of another half month across almost impassable mountains, we found a well-damasked table for thirty-five or forty persons, handsome china and plate, excellent cookery, a profusion of hock, claret, and champagne, a beautiful dessert of European fruits—in short, a really capital English dinner. Now I assert that this repast afforded as strong and undeniable proof of British energy, in the abstract, as did the battle of the Nile, the storming of Badajoz, the wonderful conflict of Meanee, or any other exploit accomplished by the obstinate resolution, as well as dashing valour, of John Bull. Wonderful people! plodding, adventurous; risking all; ruined, yet rising again; oakhearted, hardbitten Britons! You and your descendants shall reclaim, and occupy, and replenish all those portions of the globe habited by the savage. A few more turns of the year-glass, and the English language

—who can doubt it?—will be universal, except in a few of the old-established and time-mouldy nations of little Europe, to whom, by some inscrutable dispensation, it is denied to reproduce themselves beyond their own original limits of empire. We have accepted the glorious commission; may we prove worthy instruments of the great work! *

A feast of creature comforts may appear an unfit text for such a subject; but perhaps my deduction will not seem extravagant when it is remembered that within the memory of many hale old men there was no white inhabitant of this vast continent, and nothing more eatable than a haunch of kangaroo, more drinkable than a cup of water, even where Sydney now stands; and that, little more than a quarter of a century ago, these Plains, to which most of the luxuries of the Old World now find their way, were not even known to exist.

One of the delicacies of Mr. Lawson's table on the above occasion was the fresh-water cod, cod perch, or *Grystes Peelii*, only found on this side the mountains. One fish was more than sufficient for the whole party.

November 14th.—Halted at "Macquarie Plains." Macquarie! what an all-pervading name in New South Wales is this! Rivers, mountains, plains, counties, ports, forts, harbours, lakes, streets, places, public buildings, promenades, &c., all are the namesakes of this creative Governor! a nominal monopoly, which, as I remarked to his present Excellency, acts unfairly upon his successors; for it leaves them so little to be known

* At a Missionary meeting in Sydney, 1851, the Bishop of New Zealand stated that there is an Englishman settled in every island of the Pacific.

by, that "The Fitz Roy polka coat, silk lined, at 30*s.*;" and "The Fitz Roy omnibus, fare 6*d.*" are the only innovations for the public good to which the patronage of Sir Charles has hitherto given birth. The explorers of those days fathered all their foundlings upon the willing Governor, so that he was driven at length to affiliate some of them under his Christian name; thus we meet with "Lachlan Swamps," "Lachlan Rivers," *cum multis aliis.* The façades of nearly every public edifice attest the vigour with which, during his long reign, the worthy general wielded the enormous convict power with which his office invested him. Their utility is beyond doubt, though many are going to ruin. There may be two opinions as to their beauty of design; in mine, his Excellency's architect well merits the epitaph accorded to a famous predecessor, Van Brugh perhaps:—

"Lie heavy on him Earth, for he
Laid many a heavy load on thee."

This morning we drove to Bathurst, the capital of the district, eight miles, for the purpose of receiving an address and visiting the township. The road lay across the terrestrial billows, the long "ground swell" of the Plains, which reminded me in some degree of the "rolling prairies" of Iowa and Wisconsin, although the herbage of the latter is immeasurably superior.

During the last four miles we were encompassed round about by an equestrian escort of all ranks and ages, in number about two hundred, which took us into its keeping for the remainder of the drive. There were

"gents" in green cutaways and cords; "parties" in black dress coats, satin vests *à la* Doudney, and white Berlin gloves; and one or two old soldier-like figures, with stiff stocks, formal whiskers, and upright seats. These contrasted well with many gradations of the real "currency" cavalier, handsome looking men in loose tunics and blouses, broad belts, tweed pantaloons strapped inside the legs with wide leathern stripes, cabbage-tree hats tied under the throat, bare necks, and beards and ringlets in hirsute profusion. There was an inferior class of the same order, wearing light drab jackets of colonial tweed, some with black velvet collars and cuffs, the everlasting cabbage-tree hat, white trowsers up to the knees, hunting spurs and whips. Here and there among the throng rode an individual of a Puritan or Romish cut, hurried by the general excitement out of his usual demeanour and pace. Next came a legion of lathy lads, standing in their stirrups, and plainly showing by their first-rate equitation that their education had taken the direction of cattle-hunting and stock-driving rather than that of the humanities. All alike came charging alongside, around, and behind; gallop, trot, canter, pull up, and gallop again; themselves and ourselves in one continual cloud of dust—all apparent confusion, yet not one horse's nose at any time shot ahead of the vice-regal equipage.

If ever the circumstances of the colony should compel it to raise a local force for the preservation of internal order, I would recommend the authorities to enrol a light dragoon corps, to be called the Australian Hussars. It would be a popular service with certain individuals

of all classes, fit, perhaps, for nothing else. There are plenty of old soldiers to instruct and command them; and plenty of light, long-armed, bow-legged, (and, as James loves to depict his ruffling cavaliers,) "deep-chested and hollow-flanked" fellows, who have been on horseback ever since they were born, and who know how to rough it in the bush, ready for the ranks of a regiment with good pay, a showy uniform, and a discipline not too stringent. There are, moreover, plenty of active, wiry, and hardy horses, ready to "mount" such a body.

At length we came down in one grand swoop upon the Macquarie River—the Wambool of the blacks—now a shallow gravelly stream shrunk between the wide-apart and lofty banks, but after heavy rains an impassable and destructive torrent.

It was an amusing and cheering sight to see the troop of horsemen accompanying us, and even the gentry delighting in gigs, like Ossian's car-borne heroes, taking the river at full gallop in the height of their glee, and making the water spin twenty feet into the air. All was loyalty and hilarity, pleasant to the eye and to the mind of an Old Country man and a good subject. Every one smiled and shouted a warm welcome to the new representative of the Crown.

Your Englishman will sometimes talk, sometimes write like a Republican. Your British colonist, when the shoe pinches will sometimes vapour about separation. But in his heart of hearts he feels the real value of our glorious constitution—our admirable institutions. His fealty may be dormant, but it is not extinct. I truly believe that a

ruler or a government must personally and repeatedly injure or wrong a Briton—wherever naturalized—before he shall be driven to the serious entertainment of a rebellious thought against his country and his sovereign —especially when that sovereign is a young and virtuous lady.

I cannot conscientiously compliment Bathurst on its external aspect. It is as yet the mere promise of a red-brick rectangular town, looking, as his Excellency remarked, (and Governors' jokes are always applauded and recorded!) looking as if it had just been put down to bake on the hot, bare and bright slope which forms its site. This site seems singularly ill-chosen. There is no shade from sun nor shelter from wind. The want of fuel will soon be severely felt—indeed has already been so, nearly all the neighbouring timber having been cut down, and no coal-mines existing in this Australian Traz os Montes. It is said that coal of good quality may be had at Piper's Flat, though none has yet been "got" there.

Mrs. Black's hotel, whither his Excellency repaired to receive the address, is an excellent specimen of an Australian provincial inn. In his inland hotels, however, Brother Jonathan beats Brother Cornstalk hollow; but then the Americans, having less taste for domesticity than the Australians or Canadians, frequent such establishments infinitely more. In the little prairie town of Chicago, on the western shore of Lake Michigan, full 1,800 miles up the St. Lawrence, I found better French cookery at Shelly's hotel than is to be had at any table, public or private, in New South Wales—and wine as

good, with moderate charges. Yet Chicago was at that time not seven years old.

Most of the members of the deputation destined to present the address having for the last hour revelled in the vice-regal dust as well as their own, the weather being moreover fearfully hot, and themselves (for they were substantial citizens and settlers) apparently in soft condition, a little delay was allowed them for ablutionary purposes;—and indeed such was the plight we were all in, that it required the utmost aid of soap and water to ensure our recognition by our nearest friends.

Meanwhile, the Governor retired with his ministers and suite to a private council chamber to discuss—beer, or rather a bland beverage called "Apperley's mixture," concocted by that oriental gentleman—our companion on this part of our tour—and having bottled ale, ginger beer, mint, and sugar for its ingredients. Ah! a Sybarite in search of a new pleasure might wisely compound for a throat-full of dust, to have it laid by such a draught as that cooling cup!

After the reception of the address we proceeded to visit the county gaol—a fine building, and one which in Australian towns has always hitherto—perhaps for obvious reasons—been the first public edifice erected; except indeed the public-houses, whereof at Bathurst there are two at the corners of every street, while along each side of them the sign-posts are so numerous, as to form something like a vista of pictorial gibbets. This, however, is not a feature peculiar to the good town of Bathurst. Windsor, Campbell-town, and others, have all the same family likeness.

Here the gaol is not only the first-born Government building, but it is full grown; while, sad to say, the church is still swaddled in scaffolding, without roof or belfry. It must be recollected that I am writing in 1846. In my subsequent visit to this town in 1850 the church was in a complete state. "All Saints" is of brick, the style Norman, and the design very good.

During the interval between those two years a great deal had been done by the Bishop in procuring the erection of small places of worship, and in appointing clergy for the thinly and somewhat wildly peopled Bush-districts. Yet the spiritual destitution of both rich and poor in the far interior must be still very great—thousands who have no place of worship within a hundred miles, thousands who are gradually losing sight of the ordinances of religion, or who have never known them.

There must be many parts of New South Wales where the first rites over the infant and the last over the dead are not performed by ecclesiastics—where there is no one, bearing a divine commission, to strengthen the wavering faith of the living, nor to cheer the departing and despairing soul! The very sight of the steeple and the sound of "the church-going bell" are useful mementos of the higher designs of our being for the thoughtless or depraved, the idle, the busy, and the vicious. Protestant as I am, when travelling or serving in Roman Catholic countries, I have felt a wholesome influence from the common symbol of our faith—the crucifix, upreared on the lonely roadside or niched on the angle of the crowded street, as is the common practice among nations professing that more demonstrative creed.

I can imagine the mind of the reprobate, bent on mischief, being diverted from its purpose by the sudden sight of even the rudest image of the cross and passion of Him who died for the sins of mankind!

I have hinted that ample provision for the spiritu*ous* wants of the community has been made in the township of Bathurst, as in other country towns. A stranger would argue that there cannot be customers for so many grog-shops. The fact is, that every month or thereabouts comes an influx of bush-labourers to the town, with their pockets full of wages, for the express purpose of spending them. There is a glorious scene of drinking and riot for a few days or weeks; their money is soon exhausted, pouched by the unscrupulous publican; and away they go again to their teams, their flocks, or their saw-pits, to earn money sufficient for another periodical debauch. Nor, when very flush of coin, do these rough fellows confine themselves to vulgar drinks. Sometimes they indulge in a bout at the "swells' tipple," as they call champagne, starting a dozen or two into a pail, and baling it down their throats with their tin mugs. Nay, for want of a baler, some of them have been known to lap up their liquor as cats do cream! Grangosier himself could hardly outdo the bibulous capabilities of some of these spongy revellers. Almost incredible tales are told of the reckless sotting of the bushmen of the interior. I will adduce one only as related in 1849 by a provincial newspaper.

Five labourers, who had "stopped out" the reaping and shearing at a long distance from the town of Geelong, put up at a well-known bush-tavern on the road;

and in the course of two or three days spent amongst them 130*l.*, besides selling the whole of their clothes, bedding, shears, and reaping-hooks to the servants and hangers-on about the house, the price of which was also spent in drunkenness and riot.

The worst of it is, that to encourage these brutal habits is directly conducive to the interests of the employers of labour, for no man in New South Wales—no unmarried man at least—will do a "hand's-turn" of work so long as he has a shilling in his pocket.

But I must not be too sweeping in an accusation of drunkenness against the bush-people. Teetotalism—that practical confession of the subservience of the soul to the body, of the power of the animal propensities over the reason—is prevalent among all classes in the provinces. Many indeed are Rechabites by force of circumstances rather than by choice,—living in tents, and drinking no wine,—because they can get no better lodging or beverage in the remote wilderness.

I have mentioned our visit to the gaol at Bathurst, because here I witnessed the effects of protracted confinement upon an Aboriginal prisoner. This man, Fishhook by name, had been sentenced to imprisonment for cattle-stealing—although it was by no means certain that he had not been the mere cat's-paw of white depredators. When brought out of his cell for the inspection of the Governor, he showed little or no sign of intellect, and when I saw him again a month later he was quite idiotic. The poor black had left within those high brick walls the little mind he ever had, whilst his soul-case looked in the highest preservation—for he was

naturally of athletic frame, and to him prison fare was profusion. Sir Charles ordered his immediate release; and my excellent friend the member for Bathurst, undertook to interpret his Excellency's merciful intention to the culprit, and to convey to him at the same time a suitable admonition.

Now I have no wish to be presumptuous, but I do believe that, in spite of my late arrival in the colony and my utter ignorance of the blacks, I could have given utterance to as much genuine Australian as was comprised in the spirited and ingenious harangue of the worthy senator. The language, or rather lingo, he employed occasioned us all much surprise at the time; but we subsequently found that it was by no means an original invention of this gentleman. This kind of bush *patois*, chiefly composed of very broken English mixed with other words quite foreign to either the British or native tongues, has long been the established mode of oral communication with the blacks.

With the open mouth and drooping lip of perfect vacancy, yet with a kindling eye, the poor "black fellow" received his liberty.

All imprisonment—indeed all punishments hitherto invented—it is obvious enough are extremely unequal and therefore unjust in their operation; the solitary system preeminently so. The dull, lethargic, and ignorant sleep or doze through the heavy hours. The active, energetic, and imaginative suffer cruelly. To the free roaming savage, fresh from his boundless forests, the dark contracted cell must be madness and martyrdom. I am well pleased to be able to interpolate here the

remark, that in the year 1850 I saw Mr. Fishhook for the third time, when, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Suttor, who had taken him into his protection and service from the moment of his manumission, his mental health was perfectly reestablished.

CHAPTER VII.

A COROBBERY—"THE OLD BULL"—ABORIGINES—THEIR EXTERIOR—WOMEN — WEAPONS — FOOD — CANNIBALISM — LANGUAGE — MANORIAL RIGHTS —BLACK OUTRAGES AND WHITE REPRISALS—EVICTION AND DESTRUCTION OF ABORIGINES—POISON—MASSACRE—THE LAW'S VENGEANCE—"THE OLD BULL"'S DEATH — NATIVE LABOURERS AND POLICE — MISSIONS — JACKY-JACKY—DEATH OF KENNEDY.

AFTER dinner this evening our attentive host, Mr. Lawson, procured for our entertainment a Corobbery, or native dance. Proceeding to a short distance from the house, we found a level spot illuminated by a large blazing fire of logs and branches—for these aboriginal ballets always take place after dark. In the dusky distance sat a crowd of indistinct figures, while on one side of the fire squatted a party of "gins,"* who, after some preparations, commenced drumming upon a skin tightly stretched over their knees, assisting the dull cadence with a monotonous song, or rather scream. This had continued a few minutes, gradually increasing in loudness and energy, when the men, uttering a wild howl, sprung upon their feet and began the dance.

* Native women—from γυνή, mulier, evidently!

They were all naked, or nearly so, and painted from top to toe in fantastic fashion—the pattern most in vogue being an imitation of a skeleton, contrived by chalking out the position of the spine and ribs with a white pigment. Their legs were uniformly striped downwards with broad white lines.

The first performance was a war-dance, wherein a variety of complicated evolutions and savage antics were gone through, accompanied by a brandishing of clubs, spears, boomerangs, and shields. Suddenly the crowd divided into two parties, and after a chorus of deafening yells and fierce exhortations, as if for the purpose of adding to their own and each other's excitement, they rushed together in close fight.

One division, shortly giving way, was driven from the field, and pursued into the dark void, where roars and groans, and the sound of blows, left but little to be imagined on the score of a bloody massacre. Presently the whole corps reappeared close to the fire, and, having deployed into two lines and "proved distance," (as it is called in the sword exercise,) the time of the music was changed, and a slow measure was commenced by the dancers, every step being enforced by a heavy stamp and a noise like a paviour's grunt. As the drum waxed faster so did the dance, until at length the movements were as rapid as the human frame could possibly endure. At some passages they all sprung into the air a wonderful height, and, as their feet again touched the ground, with the legs wide astride, the muscles of the thighs were set a quivering in a singular manner, and the straight white lines on the limbs being thus put in

oscillation, each stripe for the moment became a writhing serpent, while the air was filled with loud hissings. This particular *tour de force*, which had a singular effect in the fire-light, requires great practice. I remarked that the front-rank men only were adepts at it; and I was told that some could never acquire it,—as sundry of my countrymen can never unravel with their clumsy feet the mysteries of the waltz and polka.

The most amusing part of the ceremony was the imitations of the dingo, kangaroo, and emu. When all were springing together in emulation of a scared troop of their own marsupial brutes, nothing could be more laughable, nor a more ingenious piece of mimicry. As usual in savage dances, the time was kept with an accuracy never at fault. The gentlemen of our party alone attended the Corobbery; for, whatever heraldry might do, decency could not have described any one of the performers as a "salvage man cincted, proper!" The men were tall and straight as their own spears, many of them nearly as thin, but all surprisingly active. Like most blacks they were well chested and shouldered, but disproportionately slight below the knee.

The chief of this tribe, and the only old man belonging to it, was of much superior stature than the others—full six feet two inches in height, and weighing fifteen stone. Although apparently approaching threescore years, and somewhat too far gone to flesh, the strength of "the Old Bull"—for that was his name—must still have been prodigious. His proportions were remarkably fine; the development of the pectoral muscles and the depth of chest were greater than I had ever seen in individuals

of the many naked nations through which I have travelled. A spear laid across the top of his breast as he stood up, remained there as on a shelf. Although ugly, according to European appreciation, the countenance of the Australian is not always unpleasing. Some of the young men I thought rather well looking, having large and long eyes, with thick lashes and a pleasant frank smile. Their hair I take to be naturally fine and long, but from dirt, neglect, and grease, every man's head is like a huge black mop. Their beards are unusually black and bushy. I have since seen one or two domesticated Aborigines whose crops were remarkably beautiful, parted naturally at the top of the head, and hanging on the neck in shining curls. The skin, however, is so perfectly sable, the lips so thick, and the nose so flat, as to qualify the Australian black for the title of the Austral negro. The gait of the Australian is peculiarly manly and graceful; his head thrown back, his step firm; in form and carriage at least he looks creation's lord,

> " —— erect and tall,
> God-like erect, in native honour clad."

If our first parent dwelt in Mesopotamia, and his colour accorded with the climate, his complexion must have more nearly resembled the Australian's than our own. In the action and "station" of the black there is none of the slouch, the stoop, the tottering shamble, incident all upon the straps, the braces, the high heels, and pinched toes of the patrician, and the clouted soles of the clodpole whiteman.

It is surprising that, naked as nature, the Aborigines

can endure equally the hot winds of summer and the frosts of winter, a range of thermometer from 120° to 20°. All the men are disfigured by the absence of one of the front teeth, which is punched out with great ceremony on the attainment of the age of puberty. Another very unbecoming practice in both sexes consists in a rude species of tattooing, performed by a series of cuts on the flesh of the breast and shoulders, which, by some special treatment, are made to heal in high ridges, having precisely the appearance of a weal from the severe stroke of a whip. Nor is the white head-band, which tightly compresses the forehead, any more ornamental than its use is comprehensible. According to the rules of what poor Theodore Hook called "Free knowledgy," the Australian cranium is exceedingly ill shaped—the animal bumps largely preponderating over the intellectual.

The women are mere drudges and sumpter-animals, preparing the food in camp and on journeys carrying the baggage as well as the infants, while the men stalk in front bearing their weapons alone. Wooed, as it is said, by dint of blows, they are ever after ruled by club law; and there is for them no reservation as to the thickness of the corrective stick! At meals they sit apart from the males, and their food is thrown to them as to the dogs. Polygamy, infanticide, and forcible abduction of females, are also some of the rumpled rose-leaves of Australian domestic life.

The chief native weapons are as follows:—The spear, nine or ten feet long, rather thicker than one's finger, tapered to a point hardened in the fire, and sometimes

jagged. The wammera, or throwing stick, shows considerable ingenuity of invention. About two and a half feet long, it has a hook at one end which fits a notch on the heel of the spear, in whose projection it acts very much like a third joint to the arm, adding very greatly to the force. A lance is thrown with ease and accuracy sixty, eighty, and an hundred yards. The waddy is a heavy, knobbed club, about two feet long, and is used for active service, foreign or domestic. It brains the enemy in the battle, or strikes senseless the poor "gin" in cases of disobedience or neglect. In the latter instance a broken arm is considered a mild marital reproof. "La femme est sacrée—la femme qu'on aime est sainte," gallantly writes a native of the most civilized of nations. "A woman is a slave—a wife an anvil!" would be the Australian free translation of the French dictum.

The stone tomahawk is employed in cutting opossums out of their holes in trees, as well as to make notches in the bark, by inserting a toe into which the black can ascend the highest and largest gums in the bush. One can hardly travel a mile in New South Wales without seeing these marks, old or new. The quick eye of the native is guided to the retreat of the opossum by the slight scratches of its claws on the stem of the tree. The boomerang, the most curious and original of Australian war-implements, is, or was, familiar in England as a toy. I believe its law of projection is not well understood. It is a paradox in missile power. There are two kinds of boomerang—that which is thrown to a distance straight ahead; and that which returns on

its own axis to the thrower. I saw, on a subsequent occasion, a native of slight frame throw one of the former two hundred and ten yards, and much further when a *ricochet* was permitted. With the latter he made several casts truly surprising to witness. The weapon, after skimming breast high nearly out of sight, suddenly rose high into the air, and returning with amazing velocity towards its owner, buried itself six inches deep in the turf, within a few yards of his feet. It is a dangerous game for an inattentive spectator. An enemy, or a quarry, ensconced behind a tree or bank, safe from spear or even bullet, may be taken in the rear and severely hurt or killed by the recoil of the boomerang. The emu and kangaroo are stunned and disabled, not knowing how to avoid its eccentric gyrations. Amongst a flight of wild-ducks just rising from the water, or a flock of pigeons on the ground, this weapon commits great havoc. At close quarters in fight the boomerang, being made of very hard wood, with a sharp edge, becomes no bad substitute for a cutlass.

Sir Thomas Mitchell, "on observing the motion of the boomerang in the air, whirling round a hollow centre, and leaving a vacant centre of gravity," was struck with the idea of adopting its principle to the propulsion of ships; and, if I mistake not, he received in 1848 a patent for the invention. I have not heard whether the idea has been made practical.

The hieleman, or shield, is a piece of wood, about two and a half feet long, tapering to the ends, with a bevilled face not more than four inches wide at the broadest part, behind which the left hand, passing through a hole, is

perfectly guarded. With this narrow buckler the native will parry any missile less swift than the bullet.

In one of my visits to Mr. Suttor, the black, "Fish-hook," permitted me—no contemptible "shy" either—to pelt him with stones as rapidly as I could throw them at twenty paces, invariably turning aside those aimed at his head or body, and jumping over those directed at his legs. I thought the boomerang would have puzzled him, but did not propose a trial.

In throwing the spear, after affixing the wammera, the owner poises it, and gently shakes the weapon so as to give it a quivering motion, which it retains during its flight. Within fifty or sixty paces the kangaroo must, I should conceive, have a poor chance for his life.

The natives are not always in the humour either for performing the Corobbery with spirit or for exercising their weapons with skill, merely for the amusement of strangers. At Wellington, a noted good spearsman having missed three or four times the piece of bark I had set up for him, I put a sixpence on the top, and taking a policeman's carbine, made the black fellow understand, that if I knocked the coin down before him, I would re-pocket it. Whilst pretending to take aim, I saw the savage brace up his muscular little figure, fix his fierce emu-like eye on the target, and in an instant he had transfixed its centre at sixty yards. Having put the "white money" into his mouth, he had to exert all his strength, with his foot on the sheet of bark, to withdraw the weapon.

The spear is immeasurably the most dangerous arm of the Australian savage. Many a white man has owed

his death to the spear; many thousands of sheep, cattle, and horses have fallen by it. Several distinguished Englishmen have been severely wounded by spear-casts; among whom I may name Captain Bligh, the first Governor of New South Wales, Sir George Grey and Captain Fitzgerald, the present Governors of New Zealand and Western Australia, and Captain Stokes, R. N., long employed on the survey of the Australian coasts. The attack by the blacks upon the Lieut.-Governor of Swan River occurred so lately as December 1848. In self-defence, he was compelled to shoot his ferocious assailant, just too late to save himself being seriously hurt by a spear passing through his thigh.

It appears singular that that simple but formidable arm, the bow and arrow, is unknown in Australia, as well as in New Zealand, although used by the natives of many of the smaller South Sea islands. The Englishman has a natural respect for the six-foot bow and cloth-yard shaft which his ancestors wielded with so much prowess; and he shows it by keeping up the practice of them as a pastime. I never heard of an archery meeting among the white votaries of fashion in New South Wales —an out-door amusement so popular at home, and, as Mrs. Gore somewhere says, so well adapted "to promote the consumption of young ladies, ham, chicken, and champagne,"—not to mention that of Time, the old enemy of people who have nothing to do. But I forget; there are no idlers in New South Wales among the men, and the ladies cannot afford to expose their complexions to a semi-tropical sun.

If the bill of fare of the Aborigine be not tempting, it has at least the charm of variety. Besides the kangaroo, which is his venison, the emu his pheasant, he has fish and wild-fowl, both of which he catches with nets neatly constructed by the women. Then he delights in such small game as snakes, guanas, grubs, and the larvæ of white ants. The gum of the acacia, which resembles gum-arabic, but is sweeter, and the pulp of a bulrush ground into flour, are among his most innocent articles of food. Honey is no less so; and the black deserves to enjoy this luxury for the dexterity with which he sometimes discovers its whereabout. Catching a stray bee, he sticks upon its little busy body with gum an atom of white down from the owl or swan, and, releasing the scared insect, follows it by eye and foot to the hole in the hollow tree where the comb is concealed, and whence it is quickly cut out, after the hive has been well smoked. Pity that all his gastronomic tastes are not quite so innocent! but I fear—despite the resistance of this creed by some experienced colonists and travellers—that the New Holland savage is a most atrocious cannibal. If he be not so, for what purpose have long flakes of flesh been cut from the bodies of murdered men, white and black, and hung up to dry in the sun? And what peculiar virtue is there in human kidney-fat, which is undoubtedly accounted an article of value by the Australian tribes? I fear—very much fear, that the former is but the *pemican*, the latter the *rognon*, of the savage *cuisine*. The brawny chieftain, "the Old Bull," is suspected of having in his earlier days treated one or more Englishmen—not to mention black-game—

precisely as an Englishman would have treated a wood-cock; *i.e.* brought him down in good style, given him a turn or two before the fire, and discussed him with zest and appetite. The jaws and teeth of this huge savage certainly promised unequalled powers of mastication.

Well-authenticated instances of this terrible practice are to be found in the works of various authors; but one, related in a parliamentary Blue Book of 1844, exhibits, as Sir George Gipps remarks, "perhaps one of the most ferocious acts of cannibalism on record." It is too long and too horrible to find admission here; but those who do not shrink from revolting details may find the incident alluded to at page 241 of the collection of Parliamentary papers on this colony, 9th August, 1844. Instances of parents killing and devouring their children, if uncommon, are not unknown. One of the Protectors of the Natives of the Port Phillip District has recorded a case in which an infant was butchered and eaten by its mother and brethren. "Paidophagy" in a mother may be considered as marsupial instinct pushed to the utmost extremity!

The language appeared to me soft and full of vowels and liquids; and is spoken with extreme volubility, especially by the women. Some of the native names of places are grandly sonorous and polysyllabic. It is well when they are retained by the English possessors of the lands, instead of substituting vulgar and unmeaning European titles. Here are a string of names—taken at hazard (that sort of hazard that suits a purpose)—almost as round-sounding as old Homer's muster roll of heroes, and not unmusical in the shape of hexameters,—

Wollondilly, Gĕlong, Bendendera, Coolapatamba,
Tangabalanga, Pĕjar, Paramatta, Rhyana, Menangle,
Gobberalong, Nandowra, Memendere, Ponkeparinga,
Yass, Candalga, Mŏlong, Karajong, Naradaudara, Bongbong.

The mutual political relation of the White race and the Australian blacks, with reference to the possession of the country by the former is peculiar to itself. We hold it neither by inheritance, by purchase, nor by conquest, but by a sort of gradual eviction. As our flocks and herds and population increase, and corresponding increase of space is required, the natural owners of the soil are thrust back without treaty, bargain or apology. A tract of rich and virgin pasture is heard of through a surveyor or through some adventurous settler or stockman riding in search of fresh "runs;" and in an incredibly short time it is overrun with live-stock. Heedless of the heritage of the savage, the vigilant squatter hurries to be the first white occupant. Depasturing licences are procured from Government, stations are built, the natives and the game on which they feed are driven back—the latter chased and killed by the Englishman's greyhounds; the graves of their fathers are trodden under foot by the stranger;—and yet, wandering and irregular as are the habits of these nomadic tribes, they are as staunch in their local attachments as other men. In proof of their sense of proprietary right, Mitchell relates that the natives of the Darling River country, on seeing his men drawing water from the stream, desired them to pour it out from their buckets, as if it belonged to them—digging a hole to receive it when it was poured out.

"I have more than once," says this enterprising explorer and pleasant writer, "seen a river-chief, on receiving a tomahawk, point to the stream, and signify that we were then at liberty to take water from it."

If Mephistophiles could read the New South Wales police reports, how would he grin on finding that "certain Aboriginal blacks had been apprehended and punished for stealing dead timber, the property of Mr. Whiteman," for fire-wood! The said Mr. Whiteman had purchased the land, on which the timber grew, from the Government, or had received it in free grant from the same source. What did the Government give for these "waste lands of the Crown?"—nothing! The grandfather of the prisoner probably hunted over this very ground—the culprit himself was perhaps born under the very gum-tree whose fallen boughs he had been "stealing!" The native lords of the soil have, I conceive, infinitely greater cause for displeasure, when they see the white usurper hunting down for mere pastime the kangaroo and bustard of their rightful demesne, or pulling out of their scanty rivers the magnificent cod-perch, than has the English lord of the manor and country justice of the peace when he finds his coverts have been thinned "of a shiny night," of a few pheasants, or his stews swept of a sack-full of carp and tench. Yet many a magisterial double chin has quivered with angry emotion whilst its owner held forth on the heinousness of poaching; and, for aught I know, many a scape-grace bumpkin has found his way to this very country of the blacks for a crime no heavier than the wiring of a few hares or the netting of a few "birds."

A Christmas battue is spoilt, perhaps, in one case—a sad pity, I admit. But a tribe is starved to death, in the other!

What wonder that the native retaliates upon the sheep and cattle of the pale-faced trespasser on his land and food! He thinks, perhaps, in his primeval simplicity, that he has as good right to beef and mutton as John Bull-calf, the Anglo-Australian, has to kangaroo-tail soup. Can one reasonably expect that any man, whatsoever his complexion, possessing a vigorous appetite and no moral code, will dine off grubs and lizards when a sirloin or a saddle is to be had for the cast of a spear? If a savage have any political creed he must be a leveller, a communist; and his resolution to share the white man's food is probably whetted by his knowledge, that the countless flocks that cover hill and plain, are the property of one person—and that person, perhaps, living at Sydney, hundreds of miles away.

It were well if the matter ended with the reciprocal destruction of property; but the past history of the colony and the occurrences of every month prove the contrary. The aggressions of the savage are followed by acts of reprisal on the part of the white man. The overseer, the stockman, and the shepherd of the distant pasturing station may be a hireling convict—emancipist, expiree, or ticket-of-leaver—not a model of virtue and forbearance. His sheep are "rushed" from the folds at night, his cattle driven off, speared, ham-strung or otherwise mutilated. He passes three or four days in the bush, hunting them up; and perhaps only recovers in order to have them again dispersed. His

master visits the station, blames his carelessness, perhaps doubts his honesty. The owner goes away. The shepherd and his neighbours arm themselves, mount their stock-horses, proceed in chase of the marauders, and gain at least a temporary freedom from black forays by shooting half a tribe and scattering the survivors.

Some poor solitary shepherd or hut-keeper, perhaps utterly unconnected with this retaliatory expedition, repays with his life the unnecessary severity of the white party. His hut is robbed, his brains dashed out with a club. Three or four high-bred horses are speared, an imported Durham bull, value 200 guineas, or a Saxon ram, value 50, is hamstrung, and the rage of the proprietor himself is now aroused. Reprisals are undertaken on a large scale—a scale that either never reaches the ears of the Government, which is bound to protect alike the white and the black subject; or, if it reach them at all, finds them conveniently deaf. Is it not enough to irritate even the Executive, when they learn that a policeman's horse has been stolen, killed, and eaten!

The squatters or their representatives at the stations combine, arm themselves and their followers, and proceed on the tracks of the black-mail barbarians, guided probably by a domesticated native, and, easily overtaking them on horseback, extermination is the word! Men, women and children are butchered without distinction or stint. Superiority of weapon makes it a bloodless victory on the side of the Englishmen; but there is a species of excitement in it, and—children of

wrath, as we are—it becomes by practice a pleasurable excitement.

Dreadful tales of cold-blooded carnage have found their way into print, or are whispered about in the provinces; and although there be Crown land commissioners, police magistrates, and settlers of mark, who deny, qualify, or ignore these wholesale massacres of the black population, there can be no real doubt their extirpation from the land is rapidly going on.

The savage is treacherous, blood-thirsty, cruel, ungrateful—often requiting the kindness and generosity of the Christian who is really friendly to him, by burning his huts and crops; or even barbarously murdering his benefactors. The civilized man is inordinately greedy of gain, and regards the black as a being scarcely above the beasts that perish. The result of this combination is the certain annihilation of the savage race.

One of the great squatters—the pastoral Nabobs—of the north-west country, told me at my own table in Sydney, that, just before he came down, he "had had a brush with the black fellows." It seems that three or four hundred sheep had been driven off by night; upon hearing of which this gentleman (and I believe him to be at least as moderate and humane as the majority of his fellows) with a friend and his stockman, well-armed and mounted, went in pursuit. They shortly found that all the stock had been retrieved by the shepherds with the exception of ten wethers, which the natives had carried off into a dense scrub, where the smoke of their fires strongly betokened roast mutton. The English-

men, fully resolved on beating up the quarters of the sable foragers, fastened their horses at the edge of the thicket, and, entering it on foot and following their noses, soon came upon the skins and remains of the lost sheep. Whilst examining the black camp, now vacant, they were suddenly saluted with a volley of spears discharged by a peculiar knack, so as to fall almost perpendicularly upon their heads through the tops of the tea-scrub, which was so thick as to be impervious to a point blank cast. Finding that a strong body of natives were silently closing upon and trying to surround them, they retreated to the open forest, and, each selecting a large tree, stood on the defensive. The blacks, rushing after them to the margin of the bush, let fly a shower of spears and boomerangs, which they avoided with no little difficulty. Thus beleaguered, the three Englishmen opened a rapid fire of bullets and slugs, which in a short time silenced and dispersed the enemy. On subsequently inspecting the scene of action, the bodies of eleven natives and half-a-dozen of their dogs were found —as great a loss of life as has occurred in many a well-fought frigate action. Twice as many must have been wounded. This affair was duly reported by the gentleman most concerned to the Commissioner of Crown-lands, an officer representing the Government in the trans-frontier districts; and I fancy it must have been considered a case of justifiable negrocide, for I never heard any more about it.

In the same year a friend of mine connected with the colony, who had recently returned from a trip to the far-west for the purpose of catching up and driving in for

sale at Sydney a lot of horses, informed me that, while sojourning among the border settlers, he heard plans for the destruction of the Aborigines constantly and openly discussed. It was common, after an inroad of the blacks upon the sheep or cattle, for the men of two or three adjoining stations to assemble for a regular and indiscriminate slaughter, in which old and young were shot down, as he said, like wolves; pregnant women being especial objects of destruction, as the polecat or weasel heavy with young is a rich prize for the English gamekeeper.

Occasionally bush-gossip let out that the "black fellows were going to get a dose:" and indeed, in more than one notorious instance, damper, well "hocussed" with arsenic or strychnine, was laid in the way of the savages, whereby many were killed. Some attempts were made to bring to justice the perpetrators of this cowardly as well as barbarous act; but, in the bush, justice is too often deaf, dumb and lame, as well as blind. The damper indeed was analysed, and poison detected therein; but of course no White evidence could be obtained; Aboriginal testimony is by the law of the land inadmissible; the bodies of the poisoned were too far decomposed for a lucid diagnosis; and, in short, these deliberate murderers escaped the cord. Others, however, have been less lucky.

About nine years ago a party of stockmen on Liverpool Plains, having had their herds much molested by the natives, determined on signal vengeance, and resolved to wreak it on the first blacks they met. Having fallen in with the remnants of a tribe, which having been

partially domesticated with Europeans made no attempt at escape, they captured the whole of them, with the exception of a child or two; and having bound them together with thongs, fired into the mass until the entire tribe, twenty-seven in number, were killed or mortally wounded. The white savages then chopped in pieces their victims, and threw them, some yet living, on a large fire; a detachment of the stockmen remaining for several days on the spot to complete the destruction of the bodies.

In this case the law was sternly vindicated; for the murderers having been arrested and brought to trial, seven of them in one day expiated their offences on the scaffold. This wholesale execution of white men for the murder of blacks, at a time when hanging had become an unfrequent event, caused a great commotion among the white population, high and low—"judicial murder" being one of the mildest terms applied to the transaction. There certainly may be two opinions upon it, and therefore, as Lord Norbury remarked whilst adjudicating a similar case, "I think we had better *drop* the subject!"

In England we are unaccustomed of late to see or hear of our fellow-countrymen being hung up by half dozens; but in New South Wales, some such *in terrorem* exhibition of the law's extreme power may be occasionally necessary, or rather may have been so when two-thirds of the population were convicted felons, and one-half of the other third unscrupulous adventurers.

It is quite true that the residents of the cities and

settled districts are not in a situation to judge fairly of the amount of provocation endured by those living in constant juxtaposition with fierce and treacherous barbarians. It is our next-door neighbour, the figurative *paries proximus* of the Latin poet, with whom we are always at such desperate loggerheads. But gentlemen of condition and education, such as many of the stock proprietors, while repelling with sufficient determination aboriginal aggression, might exert themselves more than is done to prevent sweeping and indiscriminate retaliation by their subalterns and servants. More than once I was no less shocked than surprised at hearing men of station and cultivation advocating a precisely opposite course; and, on one occasion, when a fiery young gentleman of the interior boasted before me that he would shoot a black fellow wherever he met him as he would a mad dog, I thought it a very ordinary Christian duty to inform the head of the Executive of the existence of a professor of such uncompromising tenets.

In the distant provinces of the colony collisions between the races have always been of frequent occurrence—were so up to the day on which I left it; and doubtless will prevail whenever a new tract is entered upon by the settlers, and wild tribes are encountered. *Naturam expellas furcâ*—you may drive back the native with the bayonet, but the savage, degraded as he may be, will fight for his hunting-grounds; and the Anglo-Saxon in his destined progress to possess the land, to have the heathen for his inheritance, will march over his body or make him his bondsman. The best we can

hope for the poor blackeys is, that in time they may become voluntary labourers for hire, and thus gradually be brought to prefer some steady calling to their old, comfortless, and wandering habits. But it is not to be expected that they will abandon their free, though precarious mode of life, for one of hard and earnest toil unless for a tolerable equivalent.

I have found colonists condemning the race as hopeless in the way of labour, because some of them had deserted in the midst of the harvest after a few days' work. On inquiry, however, I heard that a meagre meal of broken victuals, or some article of cast off clothing, was the highest amount of remuneration bestowed on a stout and active black, while the white prisoner by his side in the hay-field was receiving a guinea a-week and regular rations. Some instances there have been of the successful employment of the natives, especially in pastoral pursuits, and they are fast increasing in number. If the haughty Red-man can bend to work for wages alongside the negro in the cotton-field—and such I believe has happened—the simple though wild Australian may surely be induced to labour with the European.

In the Port Phillip district, for the last four or five years, they have been thus employed to a considerable extent. A correspondent of the Sydney "Morning Herald," in November 1850, mentions that, in a district where the blacks have always hitherto been most troublesome, "the once dreaded Macintyre country," where scores of Englishmen have been murdered, and where stock has been destroyed or harried to such an extent, "that

not only most of the first proprietors, but many of the second and third owners were ruined," the blacks are now admitted into all the stations, acting generally throughout the district as stockmen, and supplying all the extra hands at lambing and sheep-washing times. At one station they have charge of 6,000 sheep.

Two or three days after the Corobbery before described, I saw the tribe, with their lubras and children, taking their way to some distant camping-place. The old chief collected his people by a loud "cooee"—the well-known peculiar cry of the race; and, tossing his huge arm to me by way of adieu, strode down the hill, followed by the rest in Indian file, a "formation" well adapted for threading the bush. The men erect, bearing only their weapons, the women cowering under heavy loads, they entered the scrub and were soon out of sight. In less than a month later we heard with regret that the stout old leader and six of his band had been killed in a treacherous attack by a hostile tribe, the latter having the advantage of fire-arms, shamefully supplied to them, as was reported, by white people, for the bloody and express purpose.

The experiment of enrolling as a border force a native mounted police, with British officers, has perfectly succeeded. In 1850, the division stationed on the Macintyre river consisted of forty-four men, with a commandant, two subalterns, and a sergeant-major. The pay of the privates is 3*d*. a-day; their uniform, a light dragoon undress. They are all quite young men, averaging five feet nine inches in height, light but strong and very quick at drill, the use of arms, and horseman-

ship. In the Port Phillip district a similar force has been raised. There is no want of recruits, nor need of "bounty." The only difficulty is to choose among the herd of long-legged, shock-headed, grinning fellows, offering themselves "to plenty fight" for 3*d.* per diem! They have no qualms about acting with the utmost rigour against their brother black-fellows. Such is the terror of their name, that wheresoever a section of the force shows itself the evil-minded tribes instantly disappear.

Nor are rangers of the bush, fairer in skin but equally dark in deeds, less afraid of these active, vigilant, and dashing black Hulans. Shepherds and stockmen no longer fear to quit their huts, and gentlemen graziers may now ride from station to station without arming themselves like an ambulant arsenal. For bush duties, especially against their own countrymen, the native police is infinitely more effective than the English police. Indeed, with the latter force there are always a few blacks employed as "trackers."

"Tame" blacks have been known, even when unconnected with the constabulary, to capture, single-handed, English bush-rangers, for the sake of the reward. However superior in bodily strength, however desperate his courage, the robber has no chance against the black scout unless possessed of fire-arms. The latter attacks him with a running fire of stones, thrown with such vigour and accuracy, that a few minutes would suffice to cut to pieces or disable the former. The superior agility of the savage effectually prevents close quarters; and, as for resisting with the same weapons, the poor

clumsy Saxon might as well pelt a shadow. An instance was related to me of a native following for days, unsuspectedly, the steps of a runaway prisoner armed with a musket. Having exhausted the little food he had brought with him, the white man was at length compelled by hunger to fire at a bird, and, ere he could re-load, he was felled by a stone, followed by a sustained volley - something like that of Perkins's steam-gun— which soon placed both man and musket in the power of the wily savage.

In his purely natural state the New Hollander is little better than a wild beast. Indeed, he may be said to be *the* beast of prey of his native land. Strong, agile, fierce, voracious, crafty, his eye and hand are always ready for a victim. His reason, such as it is, serves the purpose of the tiger's instinct, and has scarcely a higher office to fulfil. Compared, moreover, with the innocent denizens of the Australian bush, he possesses the superior bodily strength of that tyrant of the Indian jungle. Yet, low in the scale of humanity as is the grade of the savage, I agree with those who believe the assumption unfair that he is incapable of attaining the same standard of intelligence as the European. No really effectual and properly sustained plan for his amelioration has as yet been extended to him. Efforts, prodigal indeed in zeal and money, have been made to civilize and Christianise him, but they have hitherto met with signal failure.

We are, in the prosecution of our present tour, to pass one, the greatest of all the Mission stations on this continent, that of Wellington Valley, where we are



taught to expect a heap of ruins as the sole result of much earnest legislation, much labour and self-sacrifice on the part of the Churchmen engaged in it, and many thousands of pounds expenditure. These means, we are bound to believe, have unfortunately been ill-directed towards the end desired, or not directed with sufficient patience and constancy.

The New Zealand native teacher reads and expounds the Scriptures. The Haytian and Haiwaiian Governments are distinct and distantly apart proofs of mental capacity in the darker races. The freed African slave is as quick in wit, as keen in business, as the white man. Nay, "if we go into the great cities of the United States, New York and Philadelphia, a comparison between the free negro population and the quarters occupied by the Irish emigrants would, we venture to say, be decidedly to the advantage of the former." * The promptitude with which the Australian blacks enrolled in the police have acquired a proficiency not only in the manual parts of their duties, but in discipline, abstinence from drink, obedience to orders, &c., affords satisfactory testimony of their aptitude for better things.

Nor is there, I think, anything very extravagant in the assumption, that the creature who has sufficient skill and energy to construct the spear and the boomerang, to transfix the kangaroo at sixty paces, strike down the bird on the wing, ensnare the river fish with his nets, and pierce the sea-fish with his harpoon, who can manufacture his canoe and its implements, is capable, also,

* Quarterly Review, December 1849.

of learning more useful, though in fact less ingenious, arts and sciences.

It is never very difficult to make what may be vulgarly styled "blanket and soup" proselytes among a starving people; and accordingly the worthy and simple ministers of the Apsley Mission * had at first a tolerable attendance at their schoolroom and refectory. In 1838 there were from fifty to eighty natives resident and supported at the mission. Many took kindly to the various departments of labour —tending cattle, thrashing corn, carrying wood and water, gardening, &c. The children were docile and promising; and sanguine hopes of eventual success in the good work were entertained. But the Principle of Evil sat not idly by. A hundred stumbling-blocks arose in the path upon which these poor people had but entered. Police, convict, and other goverment and private establishments grew up around the Mission-house. Attracted by the rich soil of the Wellington Valley, settlers, with troops of prisoner-servants, located themselves in the vicinity. It soon became anything but a quiet retreat for the Christians elect. Drunkenness was introduced by sly-grog-sellers; the females were seduced away by the Europeans, and were ashamed to return; the black scholars were encouraged to deride their teachers and the things taught. Many learned merely by rote, but all enjoyed the good feeding; the words Missionary and Commissary were synonymous terms with them; and however much the lecture-room declined in favour, the refectory was always well attended.

* Wellington Valley.

Just when these zealous pastors had begun to congratulate themselves that they had subdued to the fold a remnant of these lost black sheep, a body of wild natives would arrive and camp beside the walls, and next day both the newly arrived and a batch of half-converts had disappeared together. I can picture to myself the mortification of the good teachers, as the wild Coo-ee of the savages, reclaiming their kindred, rang through the forest, and, obedient to the call, the half-tamed pupils, with flashing eyes and answering cry, tore off their garments—symbols of incipient civilization—and, once more naked, rushed into their native wilds.

> "Give me again my hollow tree,
> My *kangaroo* and liberty!"

was their exclamation, as these children of the bush, tired of boiled mutton, turnips, potatoes, and tea, and the twaddle (as they thought it) of their teachers, relapsed into their natural state of savagehood.

Dissensions arose at length among the Missionaries themselves. One departed in disgust from the establishment. So disheartened was the other by the small progress attending his labours, that in 1842, nine years and upwards after the first institution of the Mission, he opened his Annual Report as follows:—"If the work of civilizing and Christianising a savage race was dependant merely on human efforts . . . . then I candidly confess that I should be ready to despair of the Aboriginal inhabitants of the country ever being raised from their degraded condition, since so little success has hitherto attended this Mission, as well as other similar

attempts in other parts of the country . . . . Amongst all those young men who for years past have been more or less attached to the Mission, there is only one who affords some satisfaction and encouragement."

In December, 1849, the Bishop of Sydney visited the private establishment of the Rev. Mr. Watson—the seceded minister from the Wellington Mission—on the banks of the Macquarie River, "where," as his Lordship writes, "the work of the Evangelists is supported by himself and Mrs. Watson, without the aid of any other person, and at an expense which, without extreme economy and careful management, it would not be in their power to maintain." On the occasion of this visit the good prelate admitted to confirmation one adult individual of "this painfully neglected and forsaken race," as he too truly designates them.

At the Moreton Bay Missionary Establishment the station was plundered by the blacks whom it was intended to benefit, and the ungrateful barbarians were proceeding to fire the buildings, when the much-enduring Missionaries had recourse to the secular arm, giving their riotous acolytes a hearty peppering with small shot, —a fulmination of the Church intelligible to the meanest and most savage capacity, and well worth all the anathemas in the catalogue.

Past endeavours to better the condition of the Australian native have, then, it appears, been abortive or nearly so. But fresh and more vigorous efforts are to arise out of the Meeting and Conference of the Metropolitan and Suffragan Bishops of Australasia, which took place at Sydney in October, 1850, when a plan for

a Board of Missions was matured, having for its objects,—"First, the conversion and civilization of the Australian blacks; second, the conversion and civilization of the heathen races in all the Islands of the Western Pacific."

So eloquently and so forcibly did these right reverend prelates plead the cause of "the benighted" in the pulpits and public meetings of Sydney, and other places, that very considerable sums were collected on the spot, and many leading gentlemen enlisted themselves heartily in the good cause. A voluntary subscription, too, was entered upon, to purchase and equip a vessel for the Bishop of New Zealand, larger and safer than the little 20-ton cockle-shell in which this well-styled "Apostle of the Pacific" has been hitherto accustomed to traverse the 30 or 40 degrees of ocean comprised within his wild diocese. In his next visit to the savage islanders, Dr. Selwyn is to be accompanied by his old college friend, Bishop Tyrrell of Newcastle. The godly enterprise, resumed under such auspices, will not again falter.

History has no precedent of sudden civilization. When Britain was known only as the Tin Islands, the Phœnicians, trading with them for that metal, probably considered the wild inhabitants as incurably barbarous,—only fit to "stump up the tin" in exchange for such gewgaws as the savage loveth. At the time of Cæsar's invasion, the great Roman found us far from a gentlemanly, well-dressed,—nay more, a thoroughly bad style of people, by no means unlike the present New Holland savages; divided into numerous and lawless tribes; clad

in skins; painted and tattooed; great hunters (we are so still); unskilled in agriculture, (we don't "protect" it now!) socialists in regard of women (is there not an Agapemone existing in 1851?); idolators; perhaps cannibals! Yet our Christianism is nearly as old as the Era, and, as to our civilization, perhaps our Gallic neighbours will cede us the second place among nations. Certainly we have, more liberally than they, disseminated our share of that acquisition among other races.

The great body of the colonists of New South Wales have so long sat down under the convenient creed that the conversion of the blacks is past hope, that they appeared absolutely astonished, and not a little moved, by the sanguine anticipations indulged in by the several bishops, but especially by Dr. Selwyn. I was amongst the hearers of a sermon from the lips of that earnest and highly eloquent man, which at once filled the hearts of his audience with confidence, their eyes with tears, and emptied their pockets of their contents. As for the ladies, sweet souls, they are always somewhat epicures in preachers! People talk of "forty-parson power;" and it will readily be believed that the simultaneous action upon their sympathies by six bishops, all ardent in the cause, left them but little pin-money for the ensuing Christmas.

Among the various arguments adduced on this occasion by churchmen and laymen, there was none that struck me more forcibly than the following remark by the Speaker of the legislative council, at one of the Missionary meetings:—

"Having possessed the lands, having taken from the original occupants the hunting-grounds which once belonged to them, we have made these ignorant savages amenable to our laws. Only a few days ago one of these unhappy beings was called upon to pay the penalty of his life for the infringement of those laws.* I must confess it is an occurrence exciting in me feelings of the deepest commiseration, self-reproach and humiliation—a sense of reproach which must be shared by all who see these benighted creatures, and remember how little has been done to bring them to a true sense of the duties expected from them. If these tribes are to be made amenable to the Christian code, let them at least be made aware of the duties for which they are responsible. Whatever difficulties may interfere, it is therefore our duty to persevere in constant endeavours to enlighten and convert this people."

Here is a self-evident truism; but, like all truths, it remained at the bottom of the well until dragged into light by some one more addicted to ponder questions of moral polity than is common in a society involved in more substantial matters.

There are light and shade in every picture; and I do not know that anything could more forcibly portray the extremes of character in the Australian black than the incidents accompanying the death of the lamented Mr. Kennedy in the year 1848. I allude, on the one hand, to the cruel, treacherous, yet patient ferocity with which the savage tribes dogged the steps of

* An Aboriginal native, executed for murder.

this enterprising and unfortunate young gentleman, finally butchering him in cold blood when rendered by famine no longer capable of resistance;—and, on the other hand, to the heroic endurance, the unshaken fidelity, and the devoted courage displayed by his native follower, "Jacky-Jacky," who, although himself wounded, defended his master to the last, gave his body decent burial, and, after unheard-of sufferings, succeeded in saving the lives of the two European survivors of this ill-fated expedition.

Although very unwilling to admit unoriginal matter into these pages, I cannot resist laying, in the form of a note, before such of my readers as may not have met with it, the touching statements of the faithful "Jacky," or rather part of it, as elicited from him by a subsequent judicial investigation, and as published in the narrative of Mr. Carron, the botanist and one of the survivors of the expedition.

It may be only necessary for me to premise, that Mr. Assistant-Surveyor Kennedy started from Sydney on the 28th April, 1848, for the exploration of the country lying between Rockingham Bay and Cape York, the N. E. extremity of New Holland. He was accompanied by eleven white persons and Jacky the black. His stock consisted of one hundred sheep, twenty-eight horses, and three dogs. Obstructed by impassable scrubs and swamps, by disease, famine, and hostile savages, on the 10th of November Mr. Kennedy, with three of the strongest Englishmen and the black, formed an advance party, in order to attempt by forced marches to reach Cape York, where he expected to

find H.M. Schooner *Bramble*;—leaving the remaining eight persons of his party under Carron, encamped within view of Weymouth Bay.*

* Statement of Jacky-Jacky:—

"I started with Mr. Kennedy from Weymouth Bay for Cape York on the 13th November, 1848, accompanied by Costigan, Dunn, and Luff, leaving eight men at the camp at Weymouth Bay. We went on until we came to a river which empties itself into Weymouth Bay. A little further north we crossed the river. Mr. Kennedy and the rest of us went on a very high hill, and came to a flat on the other side, and encamped there. Next morning a lot of natives camped on the other side of the river. I went on a good way next day; a horse fell down a creek; the flour we took with us lasted three days. We had much trouble in getting the horse out of the creek. We went, and came out, and camped on the ridges: we had no water. Next morning went on, and Luff was taken ill with a very bad knee; we left him behind, and Dunn went back again and brought him on. Then we went on and camped at a little creek: the flour being out on this day, we commenced eating horse-flesh, which Carron gave us when we left Weymouth Bay; as we went on we came to a small river, and saw no blacks there. As we proceeded we gathered nondas, and lived upon them and the meat. We stopped at a little creek, and it came on raining, and Costigan shot himself; in putting his saddle under the tarpaulin a string caught the trigger, and the ball went in under the right arm and came out at his back. We went on this morning all of us, and stopped at another creek in the evening, and the next day we killed a horse named 'Browney,' smoked him that night, and went on next day, taking as much of the horse as we could with us, and then turned back to where we killed the horse because Costigan was very bad and in much pain. We went back again because there was water there. Then Mr. Kennedy and I had dinner there, and went on in the afternoon, leaving Dunn, Costigan, and Luff at the creek. This was near Shelbourne Bay. We left some horse-meat with the three men, and carried some with us on a pack horse. If Costigan died, Luff and Dunn were to come along the beach until they saw the ship, and then to fire a gun. They stopped to take care of the man who was shot. We killed a horse for them before we came away. Having left these three men, we camped that night where there was no water. Next morning Mr. Kennedy and me went on with the four horses, two pack-horses and two saddle-horses. One horse got bogged in a swamp; we tried to get him out all day, but could not, so we left him, and camped at another creek.

"The next day Mr. Kennedy and I went on again, and passed up a ridge very scrubby, and had to turn back again, and went along gulleys

Jacky's statement furnishes the conclusion of the sad tale, as far as poor Kennedy and himself are concerned.

Mr. Carron and a man named Goddard were within an hour or two of inevitable death, when the master of a small vessel despatched by Government with

to get clear of the creek and scrub. Now it rained, and we camped. There were plenty of blacks here, but we did not see them, but plenty of fresh tracks, and camps, and smoke. Next morning we went and camped at another creek, and the following evening close to a scrub, but we could not get through. I cut and cleared away, and it was near sundown before we got through the scrub; there we camped. It was heavy rain next morning, and we went on in the rain, and I changed horses, and rode a black colt to spell* the other .... and the horse fell down, me and all, and the horse lay upon my right hip. Mr. Kennedy got off his horse, and moved my horse from my thigh; we stopped there all night, and could not get the horse up. We looked to him in the morning, and he was dead. We had some horse-meat left, and went on that day, and crossed a little river and camped.

"The next day Mr. Kennedy told me to go up a tree to see a sandy hill somewhere. I went up, and saw a sandy hill a little way from Port Albany. The next day we camped near a swamp. It was a very rainy day. The next morning we went on, and Mr. Kennedy told me we should get round to Port Albany in a day. We travelled on till twelve o'clock, and then we saw Port Albany. Then he said, 'There is Port Albany, Jacky; a ship is there. You see that island there,' pointing to Albany Island. This was when we were at the mouth of Escape River. We stopped there a little while. All the meat was gone. I tried to get some fish, but could not. We went on in the afternoon half a mile along the river side, and met a good lot of blacks, and we camped. The blacks all cried out 'Powad—Powad,' and rubbed their bellies; and we thought they were friendly, and Mr. Kennedy gave them fish-hooks all round. Every one asked me if I had anything to give, and I said, No; and Mr. Kennedy said, 'Give them your knife, Jacky.' This fellow on board was the man I gave the knife to; I am sure of it, I know him well. The black that was shot in the canoe was the most active in urging all the others on to spear Mr. Kennedy. I gave the man my knife. We went on this day, and I looked behind, and they were getting up their spears, and ran all round the camp we had left. I told Mr. Kennedy that very likely

* To rest.

provisions for the exploring party, guided by the trusty black, discovered the encampment, and carried them off just as the cowardly and brutal savages, who had surrounded the wretched but still well-armed men, were mustering courage for a general attack.

these blacks would follow us; but he said, 'No, Jacky, those blacks are very friendly.' I said, 'I know those black fellows very well. They too much speak.' We went on two or three miles and camped. I and Mr. Kennedy watched them that night, taking it in turns every hour all that night. By-and-by I saw the black fellows; it was a moonlight night; and I walked up to Mr. Kennedy, and said, 'There is plenty of black fellows now.' This was in the middle of the night. Mr. Kennedy told me to get my gun ready. The blacks did not know where we slept, for we made no fire. We both sat up all night. After this daylight came, and I fetched the horses, and saddled them; then we went on a good way up the river, and then we sat down a little while, and we saw three black fellows coming along our track, and they saw us, and one fellow run back as hard as he could run, and fetched up plenty more, like a flock of sheep almost. I told Mr. Kennedy to put the saddles on the two horses and to go on; and the blacks came up, and they followed us all day, and all along it was raining; and I now told him to leave the horses and come on without them, that the horses make too much track. Mr. Kennedy was too weak, and would not leave the horses. We went on this day till towards evening, raining hard, and the blacks followed us all the day, some behind, some planted before; in fact, blacks all around and following us. Now we went into a little bit of a scrub, and I told Mr. Kennedy to look behind always. Sometimes he would do so, and sometimes he would not look behind to look out for the blacks. Then a good many black fellows came behind in the scrub, and threw plenty of spears, and hit Mr. Kennedy in the back first. Mr. Kennedy said to me, 'Oh, Jacky, Jacky, shoot 'em! shoot 'em!' Then I pulled out my gun, and hit one fellow over the face with buck-shot. He tumbled down, and got up again and again, and wheeled right round, and two black fellows picked him up and carried him away. They went away then a little way, and came back again, throwing spears all round more than they did before —very large spears. I pulled out the spear at once from Mr. Kennedy's back, and cut out the jag with his knife. Then Mr. Kennedy got his gun and snapped, but it would not go off. The blacks sneaked all along by the trees, and speared Mr. Kennedy again in the right leg, above the knee a little, and I got speared over the eye; and the blacks were now throwing their spears all ways, never giving over, and shortly again speared Mr.

Mr. Kennedy had previously been engaged in several arduous and hazardous services, and the year before his death he had accompanied Sir Thomas Mitchell, the Surveyor-General, on a lengthened expedition into the interior. A few days before he started on his last and fatal journey, I saw him at a ball at Govern-

Kennedy in the right side. There were large jags to the spears, and I cut them out, and put them into my pocket. At the same time we got speared the horses got speared too, and bucked about and got into the swamp. I now told Mr. Kennedy to sit down while I looked after the saddle-bags, which I did, and when I came back again I saw blacks along with Mr. Kennedy. I then asked him if he saw the blacks with him; he was stupid with the spear wounds, and said, 'No;' then I asked him where was his watch? I saw the blacks taking away his watch and hat as I was returning to Mr. Kennedy; then I carried Mr. Kennedy into the scrub: he said, 'Don't carry me a good way.' Then Mr. Kennedy looked this way, very bad—(Jacky rolling his eyes). I said to him, 'Don't look far away,' as I thought he would be frightened. I asked him often, 'Are you well now?' and he said, 'I don't care for the spear wound in my leg, Jacky, but for the other two spear wounds in my side and back,' and said, 'I am bad inside, Jacky.' I told him black fellow always die when he got spear in there (in the back). He said, 'I am out of wind, Jacky.' I asked him, 'Mr. Kennedy, are you going to leave me?' and he said, 'Yes, my boy, I am going to leave you.' He said, 'I am very bad, Jacky; you take the books to the Captain, but not the big ones; the Governor will give anything for them.' I then tied up the papers. He then said, 'Give me paper, and I will write.' I gave him paper and a pencil, and he tried to write, and then he fell back and died, and I caught him as he fell back, and held him. I then turned round myself, and cried. I was crying a good deal till I got well, that was about an hour, and then I buried him. I digged up the ground with a tomahawk, and covered him over with logs, then grass, and my shirt and trowsers. That night I left him near dark. I would go through the scrub, and the blacks threw spears at me, a good many, and I went back again into the scrub. Then I went down the creek which runs into Escape River, and I walked along the water in the creek very easy, with my head only above water, to avoid the blacks, and get out of their way. In this way I went half a mile; then I got out of the creek, and got clear of them, and walked on all the night nearly, and slept in the bush without a fire. I went on next morning, and I felt very bad, and I spelled here for two days; I lived upon nothing but salt water. Next day I went on, and camped one mile away from where

ment House, dancing joyously—the handsomest young man among the crowd of guests. Struck by his appearance, I asked his name of an old colonist standing near. On giving me the required information, my neighbour made the prophetic observation, "He is a fine fellow, he will either accomplish his object, or leave his bones in the bush!" His bones do rest there! The party employed to search for his remains and his papers were, although directed by Jacky, unsuccessful in discovering the grave, which

I left, and eat one of the pandanos. On next morning I went on two miles, and sat down there, and I wanted to spell a little there, and go on, but when I tried to get up I could not, but fell down again, very tired and cramped, and I spelled here two days; then I went on again one mile, and got nothing to eat but one nonda; and I went on that day and camped, and on again next morning about half a mile, and sat down where there was good water, and remained all day. On the following morning I went a good way, went round a great swamp and mangroves, and got a good way by sundown. The next morning I went and saw a very large track of black fellows; I went clear of the track and of swamp or sandy ground; then I came to a very large river and a large lagoon, plenty of alligators in the lagoon, about ten miles from Albany. I now got into the ridges by sundown, and went up a tree, and saw Albany Island; then next morning, at four o'clock, I went on as hard as I could go all the way down, over fine clear ground, fine iron-bark timber, and plenty of good grass. I went on round the point; this was towards Cape York. I knew it was Cape York, because the sand did not go on further. I sat down then a good while; I said to myself, this is Port Albany, I believe, inside somewhere. Mr. Kennedy also told me that the ship was inside, close up to the main land. I went on a little way and saw the ship and boat. I met close up here two black gins and a good many piccaninnies: one said to me, 'Powad, powad;' then I asked her for eggs; she gave me turtles' eggs, and I gave her a burning glass. She pointed to the ship, which I had seen before. I was very frightened of seeing the black men all along here, and when I was on the rock cooeying, and murrey, murrey* glad when the boat came for me."

* Very, very.

had probably been obliterated by subsequent heavy rains. Some charts and note-books were found where the black had deposited them.

Jacky-Jacky became quite a "lion" in Sydney; and when I last saw him I feared he was in a fair way of being spoiled, if not utterly ruined, by the dangers attendant on notoriety.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOT WEATHER—QUAIL SHOOTING—A DANCE UNDER DIFFICULTIES—BOILING DOWN—AUSTRALIAN WINES—HORSE-STOCK—A "MOB" DRIVEN IN—BREAKING AND BUCK-JUMPING—"MERRIMAN"—DRIVE TO COOMBING—SIDLING—LUNCH IN THE BUSH—A BLAZED ROAD—CARCOAR—CHAIN OF PONDS—LACK OF WATER—RESERVOIRS—A BUSH HOME—SQUATTERS, AMERICAN AND AUSTRALIAN—LEASE AND SALE OF LAND—THE PASTORAL INTERESTS—SQUATTERS AND SQUATTING—GENTLEMEN BUSHMEN—THE GRAZIER GRANDEES—THE PSEUDO, AND THE BONÂ FIDE, COLONIST.

THE reader will be kind enough to recollect that we are still under the hospitable roof of Mr. William Lawson.

This was a day of excessive sultriness—a day on which Diogenes would have desired Alexander to "stand fast" between him and the sun, instead of countermarching the king to the rear of his tub. The plains were burnt brown and hard as a brick. The sky, from zenith to horizon, was one unveiled glare. The fervour of the atmosphere was visible in the hollows, quivering in misty wreaths. But the grain fields were full of quail: so, with two brother sportsmen, I sallied out for their destruction in what might appropriately have been called the *warm* of the evening.

Upwards of thirty couple were soon bagged, the son of "Nimrod,"* with his twenty years of Indian expe-

* Mr. Apperley, the great sporting writer.

rience, following up the sport with untiring vigour; while F—— and myself, stumbling upon a small branch of the nearly dry Macquarie, deposited our guns and raiment on the bank of a water-hole, and hastening into the stream, remained there some time, wallowing with our noses above the surface like a couple of Mr. Gordon Cummins' Hippopotami. Nor was our aquatic pastime entirely unshared; for a huge Durham bull of the neighbouring pastures, coming up to look at us and seemingly approving of the idea, walked into a shallow near us, and, gravely fixing his great bo-optics upon us, treated himself to a shower-bath with his wet tail.

If the weather was unsuitable to out-door pursuits, neither did it better accord with a drawing-room held this day by Lady Mary Fitz Roy at Bathurst, nor with a dinner party of forty persons, followed by a ball, at Macquarie Plains.

Myself did not attend the former of these conventions; but rumour whispered, untruly of course, that serious discord had arisen owing to certain fair ones, savouring, it was thought, too strongly of "the shop," having ventured to mingle with the local aristocracy in offering their devoirs to the Governor's much respected lady. There was something very ludicrous in this. Where all are trading in some shape for a livelihood, how microscopically fine must the social gradations necessarily be! It would require the Garter King at Arms, and would not mis-suit his title, to define the precise degree of precedence of the wife of him who sells the wool over her who vends the "extra-super merino hose," made from the same staple. The cause of this not uncommon

jealousy of position in provincial and colonial circles is obvious enough; where boundaries are ill-marked, trespasses are common.

Apropos to this subject, at a later date I had the pleasure of making the ocular acquaintance of a lady in a neighbouring colony, who, on some question of female precedence, did undoubtedly assert that she was "the rankest lady present!"

As for the ball, the thermometer stood steadily at 92°, while we, on the contrary, danced furiously on the brick floor of the verandah from nine o'clock till day-light. Patent leather boots and white satin shoes soon became, like the multitudinous sea, "one red." The air we breathed was like a Sydney Brickfielder in hue. The music, or rather the band, was excruciating—I can find no milder term for it. It dimly reminded me—especially after I had retired to bed, and it "came over my soul" in dreams—of a description in some old book, where a company of musicians playing on claricorns, dulcimers, and such like instruments of torture, are described as causing "so delectable a noise, the like was never before heard!"

But "what's the odds, so long as you're happy?" says a shrewd though inelegant proverb. Every one danced with all his or her might—from the veteran captain, who emigrated fifty years ago, and who led the dancers all night, to his well-grown and handsome granddaughter.

Here we saw the proofs of a fine and genial climate, health, strength and spirit in extreme age and singular physical precocity in the young. There were girls of fourteen and fifteen tall and full formed women, ready,

and perhaps willing, to prove themselves such by wedlock before very long.

The young men looked tanned and weather-worn, rather thin perhaps, but strong and active—their bronzed throats and hands appearing uneasy in straw-coloured kid and starched white muslin. As some amends for its want of lakes and rivers, Australia has, at any rate, none of the sallow and agueish faces and shaky forms the traveller meets at every step on the fertile banks of the Hooghly and the Mississippi. Even the mangrove swamps—nests of miasma elsewhere—exhale no noxious vapours in New South Wales.

There is no society, however limited, without its exquisite. And even here were one or two ladykillers by profession and practice—the damsel-desolator *par excellence* being an offshoot from the Emerald Isle and connected with a warlike profession. His exploits will long be remembered in these parts; indeed, they formed a topic of table-talk in town and country. Our party had somewhat hard work in performing the distance between Sydney and Bathurst in four days. That fast young gentleman rode in one day from Bathurst to Sydney, and dined at the regimental mess—121 miles—70 of them rough mountain miles.

Our worthy host has the reputation of great wealth. An intelligent and experienced man in the full vigour and activity of life, he derives great advantage from belonging to the second generation of a family naturalized in the colony. He possesses an immense range of pasturage, with countless flocks and herds, reckoned carefully, however, at periodical musters. His brand,

particularly with respect to horse-stock, is reckoned about the best in the country, *i.e.* the W. L. with which his stock is marked is a certificate of good breed; and he exerts himself to uphold this character by importing from Europe fresh and first-rate blood, to prevent deterioration.

The mode of life and the business of a thriving stock-proprietor, or squatter, one who has funds to fall back upon in case of reverses, must be highly agreeable, exciting and healthful. But the prosperity of the ordinary stock-farmer, who has embarked all his capital in one venture, must be precarious in the extreme. One or two seasons of drought, or even of flood, one or two epidemics of "scab" or catarrh," and the grazing settler is settled indeed! Thanks, however, to a modern invention, when threatened by shortness of "feed," scarcity of shepherds, or disease, he has one partial remedy,—the pot; not the quart pot, English reader, the too common resource under reverses — but the melting-pot.

There is in this country no artificial or stored-up food for winter or bad seasons, as in Europe. The weal of the grazing interests, and indeed that of the colony, depends wholly on the natural grasses of the soil. When these fail, it is certainly better to convert flocks and herds into tallow, than to let them die and rot on the ground.

There are now "boiling down establishments" in most of the pasturing districts. Panics arising among the squatters from any of the above-named causes give them plenty of work. The public is made acquainted

with their existence by advertisements in the papers, as follows:—

"TO THE STOCKHOLDERS OF MANEROO.

"PANBULA STEAM MELTING ESTABLISHMENT.—Mr. C. W. Bell having taken the above establishment, will be prepared to make arrangements for rendering down stock, during the ensuing season, at the following prices:—

"Cattle—Five shilling and sixpence per head.

"Sheep—Sixpence each."

The process of boiling down, or as the proprietor of the above establishment more daintily styles it, rendering down, is thus shortly described by a late writer. The stock are shot, flayed, hung up, quartered, chopped in pieces, and thrown into huge iron vats, licensed to carry sixteen to twenty-four oxen, or three times as many sheep, at once. In these the fat is boiled out, skimmed into buckets, poured thence into casks, which, after being headed up and branded, are shipped for England.

The fleshy fibre is thrown to the dogs or used as manure. It ought to be so used, but unfortunately not only are the legs and feet parboiled for pig's food, but these animals are permitted to devour and fatten on the offal. The lover of pork in New South Wales should never partake of that meat unless he knows the birth, parentage, and education of the pig producing it. These cannibal swine are truly disgusting beasts—mangy, half-savage, horrible to think of as human food.

Surplus stock, or the increase which overstocks the pastures, is often summarily disposed of through the medium of the melting-pot. These tallow-factories, or ol-factories as they deserve to be called, are a serious nuisance to the sensitive traveller—still worse to a

resident neighbour; but they are, as I have shown, a saving help to the grazier in dry seasons.

In the year 1846 I find there were boiled down about 40,500 sheep, and 10,400 cattle. In 1849, no less than 743,000 sheep and 45,000 cattle were thus sacrificed, producing 160,000 cwt. of tallow. In 1851, the tables furnished by the Colonial Secretary make the amount of tallow for the previous year 217,000 cwt. and upwards, valued at 300,000*l.* This is a singular statistic of a country whose entire population is much below that of the English county of Northumberland and that of the towns of Dublin or Manchester.

It is a matter of painful reflection, too often dwelt on to need repetition, that British subjects in one part of her Majesty's dominions should be driven by necessity thus to waste the food which was given for the sustenance of man, and which in other parts of the same kingdom might have saved a million from starvation. In 1847 a member of the Legislative Council stated in his place that in that year there would probably be destroyed 64,000,000 pounds of meat by this process!

Far from the turmoil and distraction of the city, the tra-montane settlers live in peace and plenty—he who has a large family, cheaper than in any other part of the world; for meat is nothing in price when mutton is merely the soil on which wool is grown; grain, vegetables and fruit are plentiful; game, from the bustard to the quail, and the best of fish the fresh-water cod, are to be had for the shooting and netting. The colony will

soon be tolerably independent of European wines. The soil and climate are peculiarly suited to the vine, for it thrives under a degree of drought fatal to other crops. The wines of this country have got a bad name by having been prematurely offered to the public taste, and they have therefore been deservedly condemned. I never met with any that I liked, except those made by the Messrs. Macarthur of Camden, where two excellent kinds appeared at table,—a sauterne very cordial and pleasant; and a muscat wine not unlike Malmsey Madeira.

During the last year of my residence in Sydney, I was never without a supply of "Camden" wine in my cellar, and deliberately preferred it to such Rhenish wines as reach the Sydney market. After a few more years of experience in the facture and treatment of wine very palatable kinds will doubtless be extensively produced; and, as they can be sold cheap, they will become for the working classes an infinitely better drink than the highly-drugged colonial beer. Wine-producing nations are always, it is said, more given to sobriety than those drinking malted liquors.

Mr. E. Cox, of Mulgoa, has a good wine from the Verdeilho grape, the whole of which is consumed on the estate—his people at the grazing stations purchasing it of him at 6*s*. a gallon, and preferring it very much to any liquor they can get at the public-houses. On the whole, I consider the Australian wine both wholesome and exhilarating. But there is a certain peculiar twang about it, either of the stalk or of the earth, to get over

which a taste must be acquired. Perhaps some good specimens may have found their way to the Great Exhibition of 1851. I have no doubt, that not only will the Australians produce some day excellent wines, both red and white, but that they will grow their own tobacco and olive oil, silk, cotton, and flax.

A scene highly entertaining to a stranger, especially if he be a lover of that noble animal the horse, is the driving in from their pastures of "a mob" of young horses for examination and selection. This scene we enjoyed to perfection at Macquarie Plains. Two or three mounted stockmen had started by daybreak to hunt up the number required. About 10 o'clock the sound of the stock-whip—an awful implement, having twelve or fourteen feet of heavy thong to two feet of handle, and crackable only by a practised hand,—accompanied by loud shouts, and a rushing mighty noise like the Stampedo of the South American Prairies, announced the approach of the steeds.

They came sweeping round the garden fence at full speed, shrouded in a whirlwind of dust; and in a few minutes, snorting, kicking and fighting, about one-hundred and fifty horses were driven within the stock-yard,—a wide enclosure surrounded by stout railings seven or eight feet high.

The highest leaps I ever saw, were taken on this occasion by some of the wild young colts in their attempts to evade the halter for closer examination. Seven or eight feet of iron-bark rails were not too much for their courage, or rather their terror, and more than one heavy, perhaps ruinous fall was the result.

Nothing could be more roughly nor worse managed. The poor colts' resistance was foolish, because it gained them at most a few minutes' liberty, man's supremacy being very quickly and strenuously asserted. The stockman's system was foolish, because cruel, dangerous and unnecessary. But time and labour are too precious in New South Wales to be thrown away on the amenities of horse management. The poor brute is broken by force in a few days,—broken in spirit if he be naturally gentle, made a "buckjumper" for life, if bad tempered. He is handled, lunged, backed, tamed, and turned out again—"a made horse"—in the shortest possible time. The purchaser who takes him as such had better lay in a stock of cobbler's wax, before he assumes the pigskin!

That expedient of the idle and unskilful rider, the martingale, is seen on every horse in the provinces, and is the cause of many a broken knee, and probably of not a few broken necks. One of the stockmen at Mr. Lawson's, a limping, crooked little old fellow, had hardly a whole bone in his skin from his riskful office of galloping down, "catching up," and handling wild colts and cattle, through every kind of rough country on any kind of rough nag.

The price demanded sounded, at the first blush, very low, 20*l.* for the pick of the lot; but that must be a remunerative price to the breeder; for the horse's food, the natural grass, costs next to nothing, and, as I have hinted, his education is far from elaborate or expensive—the buyer having often to finish that at his own especial expense. The well-known Australian horse-play, called

buckjumping,—the like of which I do not remember seeing in any other part of the world,—is not only very disagreeable but extremely dangerous even to the good horseman. To the equestrian "tailor" it is inevitable prostration.

The cross-roads just opposite my eventual residence in the suburb of Darlinghurst were quite an established field of battle between horse and rider. Often have I watched with amusement, sometimes with anxiety, the obstinate struggle of man and beast at this spot—where two or three roads lead away to different stables, paddocks, mangers, corn and fresh water; while one only points to deep sand, salt water and the South Head. When every other branch of equine argument failed, buckjumping frequently proved convincing; and the discreet cavalier, after ascertaining to his satisfaction that he was not observed, was seen from my look-out post to return to the place from whence he came, yielding with a bad grace and a profusion of kicks and cuffs his intention of a constitutional canter into the country or on the sands of Rose Bay—Rose Bay, whose sands have received the imprint of many a horseman's length, and have, alas! been the mould of softer and rounder forms—as I can personally testify.

The price of 20*l.* was established as a sort of general maximum for a good horse by Captain Apperley of the Honourable East India Company's Service, who was some years resident in this colony at the head of an establishment for purchasing and breaking New South Wales horses for the Indian military service.

India is an excellent general market for this stock, the

handsome prices given there affording a brisk stimulus to the breeders. It will be the fault of these gentlemen if this advantageous vent for their produce fail them. Private speculations for that country are thus managed:—The proprietor, embarking his lot of horses in a ship fitted up at Sydney expressly for that kind of freight, pays 25*l.* passage money per head for every animal safely landed at the Indian port. Some very successful ventures have been made, although others indeed have proved dead failures. One great breeder told me that, a few years back, he sent two batches of horses to Calcutta, amounting in all to forty-five. On one batch he got a clear average profit of 60*l.*, and on the other 50*l.* a-head.

The cavalier in New South Wales may mount himself at a lower rate than in any other quarter of the globe—short of horse stealing. It is astonishing to see the number and the tolerable stamp of horses knocked down at the auctions at from 2*l.* to 10*l.* I have heard more than one breeder say that 5*l.* per head, "all round," would pay him. I have been offered a lot of one hundred horses at 4*l.* a-head.

The consequence of this absurdly low figure is that the best stock is seldom sent to Sydney by the distant breeders. In the far inland districts I saw many fine horses, from seven to eight years old, that had never been backed, because the expense of breaking and travelling to a market would have swallowed up all profit. Good, smart hacks, however, may generally be got at extremely moderate prices. Heavy-weight roadsters, or really handsome carriage horses, are very rare.

As for blood horses, there are never more than two or three worthy of the turf current in the same season. Some of the "Walers" have, I understand, greatly distinguished themselves in Indian racing; and judging by "time" their performances on the colonial courses are quite equal to the average running at Home. Colonial sportsmen however do not, I think, take into consideration the extreme and almost uniform lightness of the ground as compared with the ordinary state of the race-courses in England.

Myself was fortunate in possessing several excellent saddle and driving horses, 25*l.* being the highest price. For the small sum of 38*l.* I got a pair of carriage horses of such figure and action as are not often outdone in Rotten Row. My faithful steed "Merriman," who served me during the whole period of my sojourn in Australia, I doomed to a merciful death two days before I left the country, bringing away with me as a relic his splendid mane attached to the strip of skin on which it grew. The hair is 26 inches long, and the "rein," *i. e.* the space along the ridge of the neck, from the spot where the mane springs on the wither to the root of the forelock, measures the uncommon length of four feet seven inches. His height was under fifteen hands three inches. Steady yet spirited as a charger, gentle and safe as a lady's horse, honest at the wheel, fiery yet tractable as a tandem leader, old Merriman was one in a thousand!

November 17th.—Mrs. Lawson's ball had barely ended, when our party were again *en route,* the day's journey being about thirty-six miles, our destination Mr. Icely's, of Coombing, near Carcoar.

Passing through the town of Bathurst, we came upon a fine undulating, lightly wooded, and tolerably well grassed country. The upland soil seemed to be generally poor in quality, but the lowlands fertile, being much subject to inundation. The apple-tree and the box, mingling with the common gum, added a little variety to the monotonous character of the bush. The former tree has no right to its name. It bears no fruit, nor has it any resemblance to any pomiferous plant in Europe, that I am acquainted with. The pear-tree of the Australian forest has a better excuse for its title, its fruit having much of the external appearance of a large green jargonelle, but being, in fact, only the shell, hard as lignum vitæ, of the seed, which, on ripening and splitting, it drops to the ground. The box-tree rejoices also in an extravagant misnomer; it is as lofty as any of the bush. The apple-tree is very ornamental, its sturdy stem, twisted boughs, and dentated foliage, giving it a distant likeness to the British oak.

The road we took was a mere bush track; but the wheels ran lightly on the glittering granite soil, and tolerably smoothly, except when we fell among rocks on the crest of some ridge, or, in avoiding them, got upon a "sidling" on the slope of the hill. This "sidling," which resembles the "slewing" of the Canadian sleigh, is very unpleasant, tiring to the horses, and even highly dangerous; for sidling towards a stump, a rock, a ditch, or a precipice, may cause an upset, with a correspondent degree of injury to the equipage and its occupants. To start off at full speed, and thus to get the

wheels to "bite" again, is the only way to redeem an incipient sidling.

In a country more liberally endowed with water our drive of to-day might have been considered beautiful; but the dire want of that element is as fatal to the picturesque as it is, in this colony, to animal and vegetable life. There being no convenient half-way house, we made a mid-day halt at a spot called the "White Rocks," a cluster of quartz crags in the very savagest part of the wilderness, holding out no particular temptation to the traveller beyond a meagre runlet of clear water, which gave us the means of preparing grog, and, about a hundred yards down the ravine, a muddy water-hole hardly solvent enough to meet the somewhat exorbitant draughts of nearly a dozen horses.

The picnic basket was, however, unpacked, the lunch spread, "*sub tegmine* gum-tree." The servants and mounted policemen led away the horses to the pool, and, in spite of the heat of an Australian summer day, we enjoyed extremely our sylvan repast and a temporary release from the joltings of the carriages.

Four years later, travelling without a guide and with my family in this same direction, the horses almost knocked up, the weaker ones of the party tired, hungry and parched with thirst, I recognised and called a halt at this same place. Some chips of the inner bark of a tree, a fallen log, and a lucifer match soon procured us a fire wherewith to make our tea; our stores were displayed; my wife was charmed with my cleverness in finding this somewhat featureless halting-place.

I hastened away with a jug, and with a complacent feeling of self-respect, to the runlet,—it was dry! I followed my organ of locality down to the muddy water-hole—not a drop! not even mud.

A bell tinkled through the trees, it was the bell of a bullock, walking loose before a dray drawn by ten others. One of the drivers, begrimed with dust and sweat, came hurrying down towards me, and I fear I derived some comfort from the blank dismay with which he eyed the patch of cracked clay, all that now remained of this diamond of the desert. The poor jaded bullocks turned their patient heads in vain to the well-known drinking-place; the disappointed drayman, swearing two or three fearful oaths, looked very much as if he would have liked to pick a quarrel with me; but, turning his wrath upon his wretched team, he brought down a hail of blows upon their scarred flanks and they passed on, the tinkling of the bell, the cracking of the long whip, and the objurgations of the reasoning animal growing fainter and fainter, until they were lost in distance. Luckily in our case we had with us some wine and a bottle of milk, so that neither adults nor infant died of thirst, but the poor horses were compelled to proceed unrefreshed. Such is a common event in Australian travel.

The vice-regal party was, as has been seen, more fortunate in regard to water. The last six miles of a new road into Carcoar had just been marked out and partially made by the inhabitants, expressly for the Governor. It was a well-chosen but rough track, designated by blazed trees on either hand, the unbarked

parts being painted white in order to be more manifest in the dusk. After a long and latterly steep descent through a densely wooded and hilly country, we suddenly dropped down upon the little snug-looking village of Carcoar, seated on the banks of a river in a hollow vale.

In giving a geographical and a literal description of this river, it would be incorrect to say that it *runs* through the town. On occasions of inordinate rains it may form a continuous stream. At present, and in general, it constitutes what is well known in Australia as "a chain of ponds," the periodical predicament of most of the rivers of this land of drought; except indeed when the water disappears altogether.

To the grazier these chains of ponds are links of gold. Without them—and they fail him but too often—he might consign his flocks and herds to the tallow-vat and himself to the Insolvent Court—no uncommon lot, unfortunately, for both stock-owner and stock; the great difference being that the tallow will always yield a shilling or two in the pound avoirdupois, while the owner, when "rendered down," produces, perhaps, but twopence halfpenny in the pound sterling.

The lack of water is indeed the *bête noire* of the colony. It has rendered agriculture, as a general pursuit, except in a few favoured districts, hopeless; and even pastoral pursuits are precarious where this great essential of life is not a property of the earth but a thing to be hoped for, and prayed for, and expected from the clouds.

This want, too, is more likely to increase than to

diminish, for all the well-watered runs have already been appropriated, and those coming later into the squatting-field will have to put up with the pastures avoided by their precursors. The blacks say, "When white fellow come, water go away." The cutting down the trees and the trampling of stock do doubtless produce this effect. It is said, moreover, by geologists, that a gradual upheavement of the Australian continent is laying dry many of its original water-beds and courses.

No traveller can fail to remark how greatly favourable is the surface formation of this country for the structure of artificial reservoirs. Wherever, in the different lines of road, a causeway or dam has been thrown across a hollow in lieu of a bridge, there is almost uniformly a considerable collection of water. Yet the farmers and squatters have, with scarcely an exception, been blind to the practical hints given them by the road-makers. I do not remember to have seen an acre of land laid under water by artificial means in New South Wales.

But the mere lack of drink for man and beast, and of humidity for grass and grain, are not the only disasters attendant upon drought. The excessive dryness of the herbage and the fierce hot winds prepare the earth for those awful bush-fires which—whether they owe their origin to the flash of the thunder cloud or the spark of the bushman's pipe, or, as some will have it, to the lens offered to the sun by a broken bottle!— do yearly ravage vast tracts of land, destroying not only pasturage and agricultural produce, but flocks, herds, homesteads, and even human life.

To the general exploration of the country drought

has opposed one of the sternest obstacles. Mr. Eyre, now Lieutenant-Governor in New Zealand, while prosecuting discoveries along the southern coast, found himself in a position where there was no water to be obtained within 150 miles, either by advancing or retreating. In order to recruit his dying horses, he remained several weeks encamped by the little well which he had dug on a damp looking spot fortunately discovered after many days of fearful distress, during which he had recourse to the dew of heaven for a draught, gathering it in a sponge from off the leaves before sunrise. To this expedient the blacks are often driven, bunches of fine grass supplying the place of a sponge. Perhaps whilst I am revising these notes the gallant Leichart, toiling in the cause of science, may be suffering all the extremities of thirst—if his bones and those of his comrades be not already bleaching in the wilderness!

I can hardly reconcile the general rule of a bright cloudless sky and a dusty earth with the assertion of the accomplished traveller and philosopher Strzelecki, that "New South Wales has been shown to receive a larger amount of rain than does Brussels, Berlin, Geneva, York, and lastly London, so celebrated for its humidity."

If it be true that as much water falls upon this continent as upon others, it must fall in larger quantities and at fewer periods, and does not remain on the earth. At Sydney, at least in the heavy rains, in ten minutes after the first drop has fallen the discoloured floods are seen rushing off the baked soil, carrying away the edges

of the surcharged gutters, and soon disappearing in the sea. In the country the rains tear up courses for themselves on the sides of the hills, and quickly leave them —fertilizing the valleys alone.

The lay of the land is, as has been said, peculiarly favourable for the formation of reservoirs. The "bunds" and "tanks" of Hindostan, the "awais" of Mesopotamia—two regions liable to drought—are monuments of ancient enterprise and ingenuity. What the Assyrians did three or four thousand years ago the Nova-Cambrians may and must do now, if they would hope ever to be an agricultural nation, and to continue to be—as they are now become—the great stand-by of the wool-consumers of England and of Europe. It was not until 1850 that the Lacklan Swamp, on which Sydney is dependent for her water supply, was fenced in from the intrusion of cattle.

At the loyal town of Carcoar his Excellency was received with triumphal arches, pistol shots—for I saw no ordnance of larger calibre—cheers, agitated cabbage-tree hats, and of course an address. These addresses were uniformly most flattering, and therefore, of course, most satisfactory to the newly-arrived ruler of the colony. The replies, framed on the model of ministerial speeches in older countries, were, it need hardly be remarked, lucid and explicit in the extreme.

Our exit from the town suffered somewhat in dignity from the jaded state of our horses. His Excellency had to double thong his wheelers and "tip the silk" to his leaders up a very steep ascent from the river with an emphasis not irrelevant to the necessity of the case.



On Stone by W. Walton — From a Sketch by Col. Mund. — Printed by Hullmandel & Walton.

The Colonial Secretary and myself, although we flanked up our pair and even cheered imaginary leaders, were at one moment--with the eyes of Carcoar upon us—in a state of abject fear lest our phaëton should perform the humiliating act of retrogression.

However, after a toilsome three miles we joyfully hailed the sight of Mr. Icely's fence. There was a clearing of some two or three hundred acres; an approach through flourishing grain-fields; we left on one hand an extensive range of farm buildings, and, driving through a modest white gate and a neat English-like garden—the road lined with shouting tenants, servants and shearers (for the sheep-shearing had commenced), we drew up at the portico of a romantic cottage surrounded by a wide verandah whose columns and eaves were completely overshadowed with climbing roses, honeysuckles and other flowering creepers. The front looks over a garden luxuriant with European flowers and standard fruit-trees oppressed with their glowing produce. Beyond are large enclosures yellow with ripening grain and sloping to a winding watercourse; and all around the prospect is, somewhat too closely, bounded by lightly wooded hills, some of them almost aspiring to be mountains. Indeed Mount Macquarie, which is seen in the background of the plate, has secured that title to itself.*

So pretty and romantic did the cottage of Coombing, with its "woodbines wreathing and roses breathing,"

* Perhaps I had better take this occasion of saying, that the great increase of price they would have added to an unimportant work prevented the admission of very many sketches of spots, interesting to myself at least, and really worthy the pencil of a better artist.

its upland forests, grassy glades, and rural seclusion appear, that some of the bachelors of the party agreed that love in such a cottage could hardly be bored to death in less than a moon—duly considering a proper supply of new novels, a fair amount of quail and snipe shooting, an inventive cook, and a case or two of champagne! The propounder of this theory, however, yawned a good deal, and admitted that he had taken a sanguine view of the case.

Mr. Icely is a widower. His family at home consisted, at the time of this my first visit, of three young daughters under tuition of a governess, and a son at school. Their happiness—and they appear to form a truly happy circle—must be contracted within a narrow sphere and be independent of what is commonly called *gaiety* from extraneous sources; for Carcoar contains but few associates for them beyond the parson's family, and neighbours' visits, for excellent reasons, must resemble those of angels in the hackneyed old quotation. The sameness of their existence must be increased by what to me appeared the wearisome uniformity of the bush, spread on all sides within a few hundred yards of their windows. Walk—ride—or even fly—and for miles around all is wilderness—beautiful indeed, but wilderness—"*toujours* gum-tree!" the prospect may be said to be gummed up in all directions—singular contrast to Macquarie Plains, where the eye ranges over some 50,000 acres of open landscape.

Mr. Icely, like Mr. W. Lawson, is accounted a squatter in Australian phrase, and like him—some reverses apart —a most successful and opulent one.

The term squatter—inelegant as it may appear—is an official term in this colony. But it is applied to a very different class from that to which it belongs in America, whence it is borrowed. The squatter of America is generally a small farmer or labouring man, with as much capital as he can carry in an old stocking, who, wandering beyond the limits of the districts surveyed by the Government and consequently open to sale, has sat down or squatted on wild land, as the buffalo or moose might do, with as great a right and no greater to its occupancy, and no more liable to distraint for rent, licence, or assessment than his quadruped neighbour on the prairie. As the frontier of the State extends and the surveyor approaches his "form," the squatter either removes to "fresh diggins," or, taking advantage of the right of preemption, purchases for the fixed price of a dollar and a quarter an acre as much of his original squattage as he may need or can afford to make his own.

I have lodged with an American thus situated near the head-waters of the Mississippi. His hut, built of substantial logs cut from the "oak opening" or grove on the edge of which he was located, looked over a wide expanse of the rolling prairie as far as eye could range, dotted only with occasional clumps of timber. His herds, therefore, however far dispersed, were still within his ken and needed no further care than that of himself and his sons; how different from the forest pastures of Australia! He was but twenty-two miles from a navigable lake communicating with the St. Lawrence, and the same distance from his market, a small frontier

town containing about 6,000 inhabitants. He and his family, male and female, worked hard with their own hands, fed on tea, Indian corn bread, dairy produce and plain meat; and were glad to receive remuneration from travellers in return for rough board and lodging and the use of a light waggon and horses. In seven years from the date of his first founding his station he calculated on being able to lay by enough to buy three or four hundred acres when his location should come into the market. Such for the most part are the squatters of the far west. and such were some of the original squatters of this colony.

Men of mark and likelihood, "gentlemen and well derived," soon embarked in the lucrative pursuit. The flocks increasing at that wonderful ratio only perhaps known in Australia, the granted lands and those purchased even at the low rate of five shillings an acre were unequal to their subsistence. They spread themselves therefore over the country, and their owners followed them either in person or by proxy. Other individuals, who had reasons of their own for preferring a frontier life, got possession of sheep or cattle and located themselves on the waste lands.

Government might have winked at this informal style of occupation in favour of the increase of the stock of the colony thereby caused, had not the wild and lawless life of these earlier borderers compelled the higher powers to frame laws for their better government. Judge Lynch was not to be trusted in a country where half the population were convicts, emancipated prisoners of equivocal character, land-jobbers, stock-robbers and

idle and ignorant people, who had got possession of large tracts which they either could not or would not improve or cultivate.

I fear that retired officers and persons from the "ranks" of the army must be enumerated amongst the improvident grantees under Government. It was soon discovered that the system of the free alienation of land by Government was nothing short of "making ducks and drakes" of the Crown's most valuable property and most powerful source of influence. Various plans were concocted, and revoked, both for sale and the lease of Crown lands. They resulted at length in the creation of a land fund, to be expended on the introduction of free labour to cultivate that land, and in the licensing of tracts within and beyond the boundaries of location, for depasturing purposes, at small rents, with an assessment on live stock, for the maintenance of a border police and for internal improvements.

Let not my reader fear that I am about to inflict even a digest of the Land Regulations upon him. Those now in force, which have of course been compressed into the smallest useful dimensions, form a neat little book of fifty pages — published "by authority" at Sydney in 1848, and doubtless obtainable at the Colonial Office.

For purposes of squatting, the waste lands (a term very improperly and imprudently given to the splendid territorial inheritance held by the Crown as trustee for the public) are divided into three classes—the Settled, the Intermediate, and the Unsettled districts. In the Settled, the lease is enjoyable for one year only; in the Intermediate, for eight years; in the

Unsettled, or ultra-frontier lands, for fourteen years. The rent is 10*l.* per annum for a "run" capable of carrying 4,000 sheep or 640 head of cattle or horses. The runs are not open to purchase during the lease, except by the lessee. On the expiration of a lease it is competent for Government to put up all or any part of the lands for sale, the lessee having the right of pre-emption at its fair value, which shall never be less than 1*l.* per acre. The assessment on stock is 3½*d.* for horses, 1½*d.* for cattle, ½*d.* for sheep, per head.

At the period of my first excursion to the Bathurst district, the squatters were clamouring for the share of fixity of tenure yielded by these regulations, which enable them to carry on their avocations with a degree of security unpermitted by former enactments.

With respect to the purchase of Crown lands, it is enough to state that the upset auction price was raised in 1838 from 5*s.* to 12*s.*, and again in 1842 to 1*l.* an acre—at which figure it now stands. Whether the theory of a high minimum for waste lands be good or bad, is a question hot and heavy to handle, and fortunately no business of mine. It is quite as warmly disputed now as when it was first mooted by Mr. Wakefield. Its avowed chief intentions are to prevent land-jobbing, the accumulation of land in the hands of persons without capital or the means of introducing labour, the undue dispersion of the population, and to exclude the labourer from the possession of a freehold.

Opponents of this system affirm that it makes land dear and scarce instead of plentiful and cheap; that it discourages the immigration of small capitalists from England and diverts them to the United States, where

freeholds may be purchased, better land, at one-fourth of the price. One of the statistical proofs offered is that only as many hundreds emigrated to New South Wales in 1845 as thousands in 1842. The alteration is favourable for the squatting interests. With the waste lands at the present price the leaseholders are little likely to be dispossessed by purchasers. But it cuts two ways: without land sales there can be no land fund; without land fund no emigration at the public expense; without emigrant-labourers or convicts the wages of shepherds, stockmen and farm-servants must rise. High wages infer paucity of hands; paucity of hands causes hasty and careless tending, washing, shearing, and getting up of wool—and consequent depreciation of the great staple in the European markets.

I confess I find it difficult to understand why the half rocky, half sandy, densely wooded and ill-watered acre of New South Wales is worth four times as much as the deeply alluvial, ready cleared and well irrigated acre of Wisconsin or Illinois—the former lying three times the distance from England.

It seems to me that if small capitalists were permitted to purchase at a low price as much land as they wanted for culture, the natural bias of man to herd with his kind would induce him to pitch his tabernacle near his neighbour; give them a church and a bit of common land and there would soon be a village: no danger of dispersion, and if dispersion be an evil what so like to cause it as the squatting system?

The English reader must understand that the lessees of Crown lands, the squatters, are debarred by law from

cultivating any part of their runs except for the consumption of their families and establishments. Immense tracts must therefore remain untouched by the plough, and continue to be primeval deserts.

The pastoral state, it is but a stale truism to remark, is the first step, a great one certainly, beyond that of the hunting and fishing savage. It implies location, but on somewhat loose terms, and a collection of some few stationary comforts and conveniences; but the cultivation of the soil, as has been well said, is a condition absolutely necessary to high civilization and to the permanent organization of society.

Let no one, however, underrate the value of the pastoral interests as they now stand in New South Wales. In 1850 it was publicly stated by one of the greatest flock-masters and statesmen in the country, and never publicly refuted, that the whole produce of the agricultural interests of the colony, including Port Phillip, did not exceed 600,000*l.* a-year; while those proceeding from the pastoral interests amounted to 1,500,000*l.* a-year. I think this speaker further stated that, from his own squatting properties alone, 10,000*l.* worth of produce passed yearly through the hands of the Sydney merchants.

The immense area of this continent and the exceeding poverty of by far the greater part of the soil point it out as a country better adapted to grazing than to grain-culture. Less skill and experience are required in the former occupation. The returns are more rapid and more simple: and besides, there is something fascinating, especially to the Englishman who has been pent up in a

single acre of the Old Country, in the feeling that he can count his horses by the hundred, his cattle by the thousand, and his sheep by the tens of thousands, and can gallop for a week across his territories without touching their confines.

That the pursuit is popular is pretty plain. There are squatters of all classes, high and low,—squatters, (and these really deserve the name,) who reside constantly at their stations, never moving to the city except, perhaps, to receive from the merchants the price of their yearly clip of wool and to load the return drays with stores. There are squatters who drive other trades in the metropolis, leaving their country interests in the hands of resident agents, and who should therefore be rather designated proprietors of stock than squatters. There are, for instance, physicians picking up their fees in the towns and carrying on in the country extensive sheep-farming concerns. There are lawyers by dozens who practise the art of fleecing both in town and country. Half the members of the Legislative Council are squatters. The Speaker squats equally and alternately on the woolsack of the House and at his wool-stations on the Murrumbidgee.

The moment the session is prorogued, honourable members, honourable and gallant members, honourable and learned members, and for aught I know, *the* honourable and reverend member (for he has tried all trades) hasten away to the bush and to their flocks and herds, returning in a month or two, sometimes with smiling, at others with long faces—always with sun-burnt ones.

Squatting is a pursuit pliable according to the means, and to the other avocations of those engaging in it. One may squat on a large or on a small scale, squat directly or indirectly, squat in person or by proxy. One may buy stock, borrow stock, hire stock, or take stock on the system of "thirds," in which the working partner gets one third of the wool and of the increase, while the proprietary partner, as he may be called, follows some other profession, or his pleasures, or holds some Government appointment at the capital or elsewhere. Two friends conjoin in a squatting concern, and take it by turns to enjoy "a spell" in Europe. Two or three brothers unite their resources, the two younger perhaps conducting the business of the stations, while the elder—a bit of a dandy—manages the mercantile and shipping part.

When the squatter is a married man, and carries with him into the bush the courtesies and amenities of life, his retrogression from a high standard of social polish need not be very visible. But it is pinned on the sleeve of the bachelor squatter. You may know him anywhere. He brings the bush into Sydney with him, like the burr on the fleece. Shy and ungainly, or tigerish and impudent, he prefers the upper boxes of the theatre to the drawing-room, and the company of gamblers, adventurers, and horse-dealers, to that of the more respectable, and what he would probably call the "slower" classes.

Even the more favourable specimens of this order,—and there are many formed to move in the best society,—are not unapt to relapse into what an old India

calls jungle habits on their return to the interior from a temporary sojourn at the capital. The same young man whom you may meet in a Sydney ball-room, well-dressed, well-looking, getting handsomely through a quadrille, decently through a valse, and something of a buckjumper in the polka, you would be clever—in short you must be a French *préfet de police* (Vidocq himself) to recognise a month later, after he has re-bushed himself. Cabbage-tree hat, colonial tweed jacket, fustian trowsers, rusty boots, ditto short pipe, unshorn beard—one would suppose that soap and water, dressing cases, clean shirts, and other such like effeminacies had been discarded the moment Sydney was out of sight. In the *boná fide* working bushman, gentle or simple,—him who passes the hot hours of the day in riding after stock and "looking up" sheep, the growth of the beard is not only excusable but advisable. You see by the way in which his nose is barked that his mouth and chin are none the worse for their natural shelter.

Among the poorer of the single men engaged in it, pastoral life in Australia is almost savage life—the life of the savage without the softening influence of squaw, wyenee, or gin. But the grazier princes, the squatting magnates, like some I had the pleasure of visiting, are the aristocrats of the land. Many of them are well-educated gentlemen—Eton and Oxford, Westminster and Cambridge men, who contrive to spare time for the culture of the mind as well as that of wool, and tallow, "hides, horns, and hoofs;" and who maintain their connexion with the higher aspirations of humanity by a constant supply of books, periodical publications, corre-

spondence with Home, as well as by their hospitality extended to persons of other pursuits, who are able to import fresh subjects of discussion to their distant and secluded homesteads.

The worst feature of bush-life for family persons must be the difficulty of obtaining education for their children, especially in "the more elegant branches." Perhaps, however, if accomplishments were attainable the cares and duties of life become so early the lot of young women in this country that they have no time to acquire them. Indeed there are not a few establishments where a help-mate, in the strict sense of the term, rather than a helpless mate endowed with all the gifts of the muses and graces combined, is the domestic desideratum.

Although it may not require any great amount of intellect to manage grazing affairs, let no man embark on it heedlessly. The bush, believe me, is no rose-bush; or if it be it has its thorns, its cares, its fluctuations, its reverses. Nowhere more than in this colony is verified the quaint adage,—"Many go out for wool, and come home shorn." Sheep-farming has been the ruin of hundreds. But, grown wise through their own and others' misfortunes, the squatters of the present day conduct their concerns with more prudence and foresight than of old; and the majority of them, I hope and believe, are laying up for themselves, if not very large fortunes, at least certain competence. There are many enemies to the squatter. The rivalry of other wool-growing nations nearer England may be the greatest. Their chief local foes are bush-fires and blacks, drought, dingoes and disease.

There are two great leading classes into which the squattocracy may be divided, those who are but temporary sojourners in the land—younger sons or brothers of opulent English families, who have ventured their 10 or 20,000*l.* in a grazing investment with the very natural intention of making a good round sum of money—enough to live "like a gentleman" in England—and of carrying their gains to their still cherished home; and on the other hand, those *bonâ fide* settlers who, on planting their foot on Australian ground, adopt it as their country and resolve to invest in it what they win on its soil.

No need to say which of the two is the better colonist. It is sometimes, however, not easy to distinguish the one from the other. Of course, he who deliberately intends to make of the colony a sponge to wring wealth out of, does not think it necessary to publish his resolution. Indeed I have heard individuals—especially those who value local popularity—take the very opposite course, in publicly and privately vapouring about their "adopted country," its future prospects, and their own vested interests therein, whilst in fact they were only counting the number of days, and of bales of wool, that would enable them to shake Australian dust from off their feet for ever.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PARROT FAMILY CONSIDERED AS GARDENERS AND AGRICULTURISTS—THE ORGAN-MAGPIE—DICK SWIVELLER—THE LOCUST—SHEARING AND BRANDING—HOW TO MILK—LABOUR—A HAND FOR HIRE—A SETTLER OF SUBSTANCE—GAME—A BEAST WITH A BILL—THE PICTORIAL PRESS—HORSE TREATMENT IN TRAVELLING—A NIGHT BIVOUAC—UNPOETICAL PASTORALS—ABERCROMBIE CAVES—JOHN BULL ABROAD—DAMPER—HORSEMANSHIP—CONVERGENT NEWS—DEATH AT WORK.

November 18*th*.—COOMBING. A lovely morning. I was awakened early by a chattering of parrots absolutely stunning, and looking forth I found the standard cherry-trees thronged with these birds,—a thousand beautiful and mischievous creatures frisking among the branches, eating no small quantity of the fruit of these exotic plants reared with so much trouble, and wantonly destroying every berry and bud within reach of their strong little beaks. What wonder that the old Scotch gardener strewed the ground, in vain however, with their painted corpses, as he prowled round the garden with a vengeful face and a gun as long as himself!

Beyond the garden fence, down on the cultivated land, the fields were covered, as by a snow-drift, with flocks of the large white cockatoo,—a bird of the strongest anti-protectionist principles on the subject of the Corn Laws. The seed in the ground, the ripening or the

ripe grain, are "all fish" to him. The havoc he commits is immense; and he is so wary as to preserve an absolute impunity from gun or snare.

In delightful contrast with the shrill, harsh voices of these two feathered scolds came, from the garden hedge, the full soft note of the organ-magpie—like the low breathing of the flute-stop of that instrument. Some of the tones are as soft and sad as those of the cushat, but with even more of music in them. When trying afterwards to find some likeness for this bird's song, it suddenly struck me that it resembled in some degree the notes of an accordion, or rather a flutina, touched by a timid and uncertain hand, attempting over and over again the first two or three bars of "Nix my Dolly," an air which, unsentimental as are its associations, I always thought full of beauty and originality. On my return to England after three years in America this tune was in possession of the London butcher and pot-boys. My friends, I remember, were much amused when I told them, on the first evening of our reunion, how charmed I had been with a certain song of the streets, and which proved to be no other than Blueskin's popular and vulgar air.

There is a sort of ventriloquism in this bird's voice. You may be looking out afar for the instrument of the seemingly distant music, when a note louder than the rest calls your attention nearer home, and you find the songster sitting on a branch within six feet of your head. The organ-magpie, pied crow, or barita, is somewhat larger than the English magpie, with a tail as much shorter as his voice is sweeter.

There was another vocal bird that I frequently observed perched on the topmost branch of some tall tree, with its bill pointed skywards and singing with all its soul in a tone somewhat sharper, but not very unlike the magpie's. This bird appeared to be a kind of woodpecker, at least in shape; but I never detected him in the act of "tapping." I could not learn his name, so gave him that of Dick Swiveller, because, to my "fanciful mind," he seemed to have that gentleman's habit of indulging in snatches of song, the prevailing ditty sounding like the commencement of Macheath's solo, "When the heart of a man," &c.

One of the greatest curiosities of animated nature at this season is the locust,—the *Tettix* of Anacreon,—the Latin *Cicada*, the very same insect, if I mistake not, whose figure is immortalized in ancient Egyptian sculpture. When the weather becomes warm the locust, which has been all winter laid up beneath the earth, perforates its surface and emerges in a full suit of russet armour. Crawling to the nearest tree he lays fast hold of the bark with his gauntlets, then, squaring his shoulders, he splits the back of his cuirasse,—and lo! a gay, bright green, gauze winged and gold spotted denizen of air,—his subterranean attire left hanging up like a fusty old garment at a Jew's door in Monmouth-street, or a rusty, battered suit of armour on the walls of an ancestral hall. Not a word is to be said in favour of this creature's voice; his stridulous notes ring through the air from morning to night with an effect so distracting that one can hardly afford to pity him when one hears him chirping through the closed fingers of the

Sydney urchins—every one of whom, in the locust season, carries about in his clutches at least one of these living castanets. One species of locust, it is well known, reappears from his earthen retreat only once in seventeen years; no wonder he makes a noise in the world during his short holiday.

We witnessed to-day the several processes of shearing, sorting, packing, and pressing wool. The weather being extremely sultry, it seemed very hard and hot work—yet some of the best hands contrived to clip 70 sheep in a day. It was curious to observe how rapidly the poor panting, helpless, innocent beast was disrobed of its thick downy fleece, without breaking it, and was then let go naked and astonished back to its pen. It strongly resembled a process I have watched at Doncaster, Newmarket, and elsewhere, in which the patient looks equally sheepish after he has been done!

A more unpleasing and cruel operation is the branding of young stock. Every colt and heifer is marked with the initials or other cypher of its owner, burnt on some conspicuous point. On the shoulder of a fine horse it is very disfiguring, yet essentially necessary to prevent theft in a country where the animals, roving over their wide and wooded pastures, are sometimes not seen or heard of for months together. The roars and groans of the suffering *juvenci*, as they were hauled by ropes into a sort of wooden cage, proved how painful was the system of impressing upon them their A B C. But branding does not as a matter of course preclude cattle stealing; the marks are either cut out bodily or altered by rebranding,—some letters being easily changed to others.

Among other stockyard sights I was attracted by seeing a lot of men preparing to capture, and as I thought to slaughter out of hand, a remarkably wild cow. She knocked down one of her pursuers and was making towards myself, who having a gun in my hand was conning the idea of shooting her through the head to save further trouble and expense, when I was quietly informed that they were only going to milk her. It was the most flagitious case of "violence with intent" to milk I had ever met with! Having lassoed her horns, and induced her to run her head through the rails of the yard, it was quickly belayed there; her legs were then tied with thongs of "green hide," and the poor mad cow was milked accordingly by main force. Be it known to all dwellers in Cockaigne that green-hide rope, an article used here in various departments georgic and bucolic, is formed of long narrow strips cut from the raw skin of an ox. The epithets "green" and "raw" are synonymous, as some of my young friends know.

In large establishments, like that of our host, where many scores of hands are employed, the proprietor is compelled to keep a store well filled with all the requisites of consumption—such as slop-clothing, tea, sugar, tobacco, soap, rum, blankets, &c. All those extras not included in the stipulated ration are charged against the consumer at what is considered a fair price; and I have been assured that masters do not lose by the transaction—on the contrary, that some of them turn it to good account. Indeed some employers are accused of making too large a profit by this retail business,

charging their servants 50 and 100 per cent. for the expense of carriage from Sydney or the nearest market town. Those gentlemen, and they are increasing in number, who make wine on their estates, sell it to their labourers—a good plan, as it prevents spirit drinking. At Coombing there is a regular office, with clerks, issuers, &c.—in short, a Commissariat of stores.

The scarcity of labour at the present juncture is severely felt by the country residents; indeed it threatens stagnation and ruin to those who work up to the extent of their capital. In New South Wales all the great annual business of a stock farmer is necessarily crowded into the summer months—sheep-washing and shearing, hay and grain harvests, operations connected with breeding, &c.; so that the pressure for labour falls heavily and at once. No wonder that convicts or any class of able workmen were welcome at Mr. Icely's establishment. Hands clean or dirty must be procured at the present busy time, and during the existing industrial destitution.

Our host indeed appears to feel no repugnance to the employment, in any department, of prisoners or of men who have "served their time." This feeling is founded on his own personal experience. During the days of the old system, he had many hundreds of "Government men" assigned to his service, and most of them proved excellent servants. His present butler, a trusty and trusted man and quite a privileged character, did not expatriate himself voluntarily.

Like many capitalists in the earlier days of the colony, Mr. Icely received free grants of land on condition of

employing and maintaining convicts; and on the other hand he entitled himself to a supply of prisoner labour by the extensive purchase of Crown land.

I shall have to descant on the plague of Australian servants in another place. The present tour—to go a little a head—afforded us apt illustration of its excess. The several hospitable gentlemen who received us were naturally anxious to afford the new Governor the best reception in their power; but wherever we went, almost without exception, the domestic upon whom depended the well-being of the party took this particular occasion to get drunk—and perhaps to quarrel with his master in order to show his independence. To violate still further the chronological order of this journal, I may here remark that in 1851 matters had but little mended on this head. Really good domestic servants, especially males, were still hardly known; really bad ones vibrated from pantry to pantry, from coach box to coach box of the Sydney gentry, and smiled impudently in the face of the master who last discharged them—or whom *they* had discharged—well knowing that if they could lay a table or drive a pair of horses they could always get a place, and no impertinent question asked as to character. It is a regular Doularchy—a servile tyranny, which nothing but competition, an influx of five hundred or a thousand good house servants can rectify. This very day, as I was busy sketching in the midst of the bush about a mile from the house, I was surprised by a rough voice close to my ear,—"Any hands wanted on this 'stablishment?" It was a tall ruffianly looking fellow with his personals wrapped up in an opossum

rug which he carried on his stick, and followed by two as rascally looking dogs. "What can you do?" said I, as if I were the lord of the manor. "Well, most things," replied he, "split, saw, wash, shear, break horses—what not." "Go away up to the office. The overseer will put you on the books, I dare say," I rejoined, only anxious to get rid of so unpromising a comrade; and it was so. In a town he would have been arrested on suspicion. In the country and at shearing time he got 1*l*. a-week and full rations, and no questions asked.

The great extent of Mr. Icely's concerns renders him peculiarly vulnerable by a dearth of labour. The great graziers and even the wealthiest landed proprietors of the Old Country may hide their diminished heads when compared with him in point of territory, stock, and numbers of persons employed. This gentleman's estate and live stock are said to consist of 50,000 acres of purchased land—purchased when the price was 5*s*. an acre; how much of granted land, I did not learn; with of course hundreds of thousands of acres of pasture rented from the Crown; 25,000 sheep, 3,000 head of cattle, and some 300 horses.

Near the dwelling-house is one paddock—as it is modestly styled—consisting of 3,000 acres, another of 1,500 acres; and there are about 45 miles of substantial three-railed fencing on the property. This latter article alone must have cost a small fortune. On one occasion of the reduction of his stock, *i.e.* the sale of the surplus above the depasturing capabilities of his runs, Mr. Icely, as I have been informed, sold by auction horses, cattle, and sheep to the amount of 25,000*l*.; but this

occurred when prices were more than double their present rate.

In the afternoon the ladies took a drive, and the gentlemen a ride in the "park"—as it is styled, although to merit the name some portions of it should be cleared and thrown open. The undulating and lightly wooded uplands are very beautiful. These are occasionally diversified by naturally clear and swampy savannahs, in which the cattle luxuriated up to their knees in herbage. The pastures of this district are in general pretty abundant—the forest runs being better grassed than the plains, by reason of the shade afforded from the sun. We saw some very handsome cattle—two or three Durham bulls, for which the owner had paid large sums—100*l.* and 200*l.* in England, and a few well-bred and clever horses. He has one of the finest Arab sires I ever saw, even in India; as well as one of first-rate English blood.

We were pursued and pestered during our ride by flocks of the large white cockatoo—one of which, by dint of stratagem,—the mounted policeman attracting his attention from me by a few curvets—I contrived to shoot. This bird needs no description. The large shrieking snowy creature with the orange toppin brushed up like Mr. Pecksniff's is always to be seen and heard in the aviary of the London Zoological Gardens. Hundreds of parrots of various sorts, sizes, and hues, darted through the air in flocks, giving us a shrill scream and a flash of brilliant colours as they passed—or climbed among the gum-tree branches, busily engaged in eating the seeds. In the moister grounds we flushed several snipe, like the English bird but larger, some wild ducks

of more than one sort, and a good many pigeons of the bronze-winged kind; specimens of all of which I brought to bag. Later in the afternoon too, not being so ardent an admirer of farm-stock as his Excellency, I betook myself to a lucerne field near the house, and in about an hour shot fourteen brace of quail, and could easily have doubled the number.

A chain of ponds just outside the park abounds, as I was informed, with that curious animal, the Platipus, *alias* Ornithorhyncus Paradoxus, *alias* Water-mole, which latter is perhaps the plainest and most descriptive name. The Platipus is always cited among the inconsistencies of Australian natural history; and is very like a large mole, with the head and mandibles of a duck;—he is in short a beast with a bill, like a Christmas tradesman! The fur is soft and prettily shaded from black to silver-grey. The natives spear and trap them, and they are easily shot by any one liberally endowed with patience, perseverance and immobility of person, and who can shoot straight and sharp just as they rise bubbling to the surface of the water. As for myself, I had the best intentions towards themselves and their skins; but the swarms of flies at the water-side acting as their allies tormented my face and eyes so desperately that quiet was out of the question; and the water-mole is so shy that a fidgety sportsman has no chance of success.

It is not in shooting alone that the (in Europe) harmless insect, the common fly, is troublesome on this side of the Blue Mountains. The houses, the fields, the wildest parts of the bush, swarm with them at this

season; and, not to mention the intolerable nuisance of their continual teazing, their attacks are apt to cause what is called the fly-blight in the human eye. It is common to see two out of three people suffering under this malady, which is caused either by the bite of the insect or by the deposit of its larvæ. Acute inflammation and temporary deprivation of sight are the results attending the attacks of this petty creature—results painful to any one, but disastrous to the working-man. We sometimes met a dozen bullock-drivers in a day more or less affected by this blight—poor wretched fellows, with large green leaves bound over their eyes, staggering along almost blind, but unwilling to give in.

The ladies at Coombing employed their inventive faculties and fair fingers very charitably and usefully—as we found afterwards—in making a kind of netting for the hats of the travellers, so contrived as to drop round the face; and, although the meshes were large and therefore did not obstruct the air, the insects never entered within the precincts of the "Fitz Roy paramouche"—as the appendage was aptly named.

The evenings at Coombing were passed very agreeably: music and singing were not wanting; there was plenty of books; and on the table, just as might be in a country house fifty miles from London, lay the last numbers (four or five months old, of course) of the Illustrated London News, Punch, and other periodical publications.

The pictorial press is a very important and valuable vehicle of general information to the people of these

colonies—especially to those who have never visited the Old World—the plates conveying impressions more distinct and probably more lasting than could ever be afforded by verbal description alone. Through the pleasant medium of the pencil they learn the beauty and grandeur of the Mother country, and the effect is to incite her children to follow and emulate her. Some of the minor points of instruction indeed are not particularly consequential to a colonist—such as the laying the first stone of some English church or bridge, or the laying of civic tables for turtle feasts; "the late extensive conflagration at St. Giles," or the last "prize two-year old heifer at St. Albans,"—however accurate may be the representation of such incidents and animals. As for dear old "Punch"—he always does one good. Besides, the Australians, through his intervention, have become indelibly acquainted with the external peculiarities of most of the notable personages of Europe. They are perfectly convinced, for instance, that Louis Philippe had a face shaped like a huge pear with a top-knot of hair curling up, flame-like, above it, and no straps to his trowsers; that Lord Brougham has a square end to his nose, wears his chin in his cravat and plaid pantaloons day and night; that a very fat white waistcoat and a double eye-glass are part and parcel of the late Sir Robert Peel's idiosyncracy; and that Mr. D'Israeli has no end of spiral curls.

As a resident in the distant interior, our host has a great advantage over many of his order in the creation of a township so near to him as is Carcoar. One tradesman, for instance, gives him 150*l.* a-year for his

premises, another 10*l.* a-year for half an acre, the fee simple for the purchase of which by the proprietor was probably half-a-crown.

November 19*th*. Coombing,—A trip to the Abercrombie Caves.

Our party was a large one, occupying two carriages-and-four, one tandem, and two gigs. We had, besides, an officer and two privates of the mounted police, with several other horsemen; fourteen persons in all and twenty horses. A dray with tents, provisions, &c. preceded us at daylight—the cavalcade itself following at 8 A.M.

The plan intended was to reach the caves and encamp there in one day's march—distance 35 miles. The dray however could not keep up. One of the drivers got the fly-blight; the horses knocked up; so after a council of procedure we agreed to halt at a place called "Fiddes Station" for the night. Whether the said Fiddes was a being still in the flesh, extinct, or purely imaginary, no one, I fancy, inquired. The station, which was well situated on a slope looking over a well-watered flat, consisted of an empty house with two rooms in it which we left in undisputed possession of its present occupants—legions of bugs; and of a range of bark hut offices, which the attendants appropriated to themselves.

The treatment of the horse in journeys through the bush is in the last degree simple, inexpensive and unceremonious. Having pulled him reeking and panting out of his harness, you give him—not corn, or even a promise of it, but a "tchik" (horse language), or a slap on the quarter, which means "be off till further orders

and help yourself;" and away he goes to pastures new, happy if he find a few blades of grass among the dust and stones for food, and a muddy puddle for drink.

The strangest part of the story is, that the next morning he comes up looking sleek and hearty and ready for the longest day's work. The fact is, there is much good and hard nourishment in Australian grass, nourishment greatly better than that yielded by ranker pasturage. A steed that had passed his night revelling in a Cheshire meadow would make but a poor figure in a series of journeys of forty to sixty miles a-day under a semi-tropical sun. Hereabouts the feed is abundant; the hills lightly wooded and grassed up to their tops—the valleys bare of trees, with chains of pools running along them.

After a merry if not a very delicately dressed meal *al fresco*—fresco, with the thermometer at 85°—we all set to work to hut ourselves for the night. The Governor and his lady had a bell tent. Other canvas contrivances were pitched or half pitched, for we had few practised hands and the ground was almost impenetrable to the pegs. A more loose and lop-sided camp I never saw. My tent, viewed by moonlight, looked like a drunken giantess staggering in quest of adventures.

Then came the serving out of blankets, the purloining of carriage cushions for pillows, the pulling on of various but not picturesque or becoming nightcaps; (whoever saw a male nightcap that was not quizzical?—quizzical enough to injure materially, perhaps fatally, the dignity of the husband in the eyes of the wife! what hero con-

tinues to be a hero in a cotton nightcap with a tassel to it? Ladies and gentlemen, I pause for a reply.)

Lastly, there supervened such a night as I would not wish my direst enemy to undergo. The heat, the damp, the smoke of the fires, the mosquitos, the flying bugs! the ants they crept in, and the ants they crept out of the inmost penetralia of our clothing—sleep, in short, with most of us was out of the question. Need it be told to any one conversant with human nature that the snores of those possessed of greater powers of somnolence were cruel aggravations of our painful vigils! Twice I made tours nocturnal round the camp, and was charmed to find several fellow-sufferers—several who could not forget their grievances in sleep.

"Oh! these detestable items of entomology!" exclaimed the voice of one crying in the bush not far off—of one whose profession moved him doubtless to apostrophize his tiny tormentors in euphuistic terms rather than in those of execration. I fear however that there was more of swearing than of praying in our camp that night. Myself was heard to exclaim in my trouble, "If this be pleasure, what is pain?" an interjection duly recorded against me the next morning. Nevertheless I hold it a stale and ungracious deed to challenge the amount of enjoyment accruing from a picnic or pleasure party. Pluck your rose, without thorns if you can; but if you do prick your fingers, don't grumble! that is the best philosophy. Mr. Mark Tapley would have been quite "jolly" under our circumstances, because it would have been creditable so to be.

November 20th.—Early rising this morning required

no great effort. We were up and off by four o'clock. Away we went through pathless woods—for here no track guided our steps; nor in any other country in the world could a four-in-hand carriage have been safely driven over the natural surface of the forest soil.

We passed one or two small sheep stations. Nothing of the Arcadian, the romantic, or the picturesque was there; nothing to recal Florian and his meadows *émaillées de fleurs*, his *brebis*, his *bergères*, and their garlanded *houlettes*. There was poverty, dirt, and rags, only to be surpassed in the worst provinces of poor Ireland. The women, who were acting as hut-keepers, and their children looked half starved and dejected, and their huts were totally devoid of any of the ordinary domestic utensils or articles of comfort. At one of these places it was with difficulty that we procured a tin cup of very bad water. Whenever I met in New South Wales with such cases of family destitution as this, I suspected that a drunken husband and father was the cause thereof.

As we approached the Caves the scenery grew wilder and rougher, reminding me somewhat of the Lower Himalayas; but the eucalyptus and acacia are poor substitutes for the tree-rhododendron and the splendid deodara pine. It would have been beautiful, but for the total absence of water and the dismal aspect of the myriads of fire-blackened logs, erect or lying about in all directions, encumbering our path. Path, indeed, there was none: for some time we had been driving through brushwood up to the horses' knees, as thick and not

unlike moorland heather. But we had no fear of losing ourselves, for we were under the guidance of Mr. Davidson, who, on a surveying expedition, had originally discovered these caves.

At length we reached the brow of a hill about half a mile from the object of our visit, beyond which the carriages could not proceed. Right below us, in the cleft of a deep ravine overhung by grassy hills, lay a huge black rock about a quarter of a mile in extent, which we reached after a severe scramble. The mass is perforated by a natural tunnel, 200 feet in length, from 50 to 80 feet high, and from 30 to 50 in width, whence numerous minor caverns and galleries ramify to the right and left. The tunnel has the appearance, by the subdued light within, of an immense Pagan temple, numerous idol-like crags and stalagmites assisting the similitude. Water has evidently been both the excavator and the beautifier of this grand natural edifice. About half way through there remains a dark pool, exquisitely pure and cold. The caves are the night lodgings of numerous wallabis and wombats, the former a small kind of kangaroo, the latter a sort of marsupial bear nearly resembling the sloth. Swallows were the only day boarders we found there.

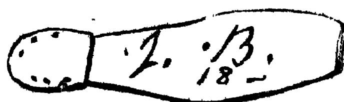
The police-officer and myself explored with lighted tapers many of the galleries and vaulted chambers, the colonnades, chapels, and aisles of this singular spot. To get into some of them, we had to crawl on our hands and knees. All were as cold as death, and smelling of the grave, hot and healthy as was the atmosphere above ground. *A horrid reflection crossed my mind more than* once that a trifling fragment of the vast arch might fall,

and, (*not* crush us to atoms, for that would have been comparative mercy!) but close the narrow passage between the upper world and our living tomb! A momentary effort of the imagination took in all this and a host of other concomitant pleasantries, including a meal upon sperm candles, another upon boots and gloves, and, lastly—closing scene of the subterranean tragedy!—the "terrific combat" for whether of the twain was to devour the survivor. After all, there are things upon the cards more serious than a sleepless night in company with crawling and stinging insects!

The Abercrombie Caves are certainly a magnificent freak of Nature. Yet I will not press my Derbyshire friends to lose no time in coming to visit them, because a journey of 16,000 miles might possibly interfere with the ordinary course of life of quiet domestic people; and besides, there are caves very similar to them, and quite as beautiful, at Matlock. Upon my life! I might almost fancy myself there now; for at this distant spot among the wild Australian hills, where there is not a man to a million acres, I descry remnants of the well-known black bottle, proof positive of the presence of the beer and beef-fed Briton, and great vulgar names scrawled on the white quartz rocks and snowy stalactites. Thus fares it with the Pyramids; thus with the Table Rock of Niagara; thus with that monument of exquisite and delicate taste, the Tâj Mahâl of Hindostan.

An honest man need never be ashamed of his name; and such, I suppose, is John Bull's apology. Woe betide the leaden roof of any architectural *chef-d'œuvre* John

may climb to under the guidance of Mr. Murray, for there he, without fail, leaves to posterity the figure of his hoof with his name and the date within it,—thus:



Such a getting up a mountain as we had to perform, under a shower of hot rain, in order to regain the equipages, I never wish again to encounter, except under the stimulus of gun and grouse. Nothing but blood and breeding could have enabled the amiable lady who accompanied the expedition, and whose health was scarcely equal to the effort, to accomplish the feat. The rain, like a tepid shower-bath, continued to fall as we retraced our steps towards home. The "sidling" on the moistened ground was not only annoying, but dangerous.

Our carriage, having a low axle, slewed once or twice across stumps just high enough to bring us up all standing, to the imminent risk of our horses continuing the journey with the pole, bars, and traces, and our vehicle and selves being left behind in the bush. As it was, the phaëton (as unlucky as the celestial coachman from whom it derived its name) suffered considerable breakage, which, without the travelling tool-box above alluded to, we should never have been able to repair *en route*. It was a pleasure to gain even the filthy hovel of a man named Ireland, which we reached at 4 P.M., very wet, and where we remained for the night.

Here some of us tasted for the first time the Australian bush-bread, a baked unleavened dough, called damper—a damper, sure enough, to the stoutest appetite—whence its name, I suppose, for it is as heavy as lead. Its manufacture is as follows:—a wheaten paste is made, kneaded for a short time, flattened out into a muffin-shaped dough, about the size of the top of an ordinary band-box, and an inch or two thick. A part of the hearth-stone is cleared of the wood ashes, the dough is dropped upon it, and the hot ashes raked over it. If not made too thick, the damper comes out done to a turn in about half an hour. The Indian Chupâtee is akin to the damper, but of much more flimsy fabric. I soon learnt to think it very palatable, preferring it to ordinary bread. Human love of change is apt to relish the coarse after long feeding on the superfine. 'Tis in the spirit of the legendary ceremony of being "sworn at Highgate," wherein the neophyte is made to vow "not to eat brown bread if he can get white; not to kiss the maid if he can kiss the mistress, &c.; *unless* he prefers it."

November 21*st*.—A pleasant drive back to Coombing; the police troopers leading the way, pointing out the best track where our course was interrupted by fallen trees or other obstructions, and otherwise acting as the feelers of our long cavalcade. When out of sight of Sydney and Paramatta, and in bush duties and excursions, these rough and ready fellows discard the cumbrous *chacôt* and useless forage-cap, and adopt the cabbage-tree hat—an excellent substitute. The metal sword-scabbard is the worst part of their accoutrements;

a bush-ranger may hear its clang half a mile off. But I suspect they do not trouble themselves much with side-arms. A short Roman sword, heavy enough to split a skull or lop a branch, would be a more suitable weapon.

One of our equestrian companions on this occasion afforded a good specimen of the gentleman bushman of New South Wales. Tall and spare, wiry and active, with face, hands, and throat burnt to a ruddy bronze, his saddle seemed his natural home. As he thrust through the thickest bush, leaping with loose rein over the fallen trees, some of which presented an obstacle no less formidable than an Irish stone wall, he and his powerful and well-trained steed seemed one centaur. There was neither daylight nor grip in his easy horsemanship—it was the seat of balance. Scarcely less skilfully did two young lads of twelve and thirteen manage their poneys. It is well if the grammar-school be not neglected for the riding-school.

At Coombing, this evening—fifty miles to the westward of the Australian Blue Mountains—letters reached me from my parents in London, from one brother in Jamaica, and another in Borneo. If I ever was guilty of a pun, I should say we are a Mundi-vagant family! Verily, thought I, as I conned the domestic intelligence from such distant quarters,—verily, most respectable Mother Britannia, sitting in thy cosy arm-chair with spectacles on nose, thou cuttest out with the old-fashioned scissors hanging from thy farthingale a good deal of work and wanderings for thy children! From Pahatanui to Penetanguishine, from Ootacamund to

Amapondaland—places never heard of, perhaps, by other European nations, and not much known by the "gentlemen of England who stay at home at ease,"—from Timbuctoo to Tipperary—regions not utterly civilized—the names of thy sons are familiar in the wildest and uttermost parts of the earth! Venerable dame! may thy shadow never be less! It extends already pretty nearly over the surface of the globe.

November 22d.—Attended Divine service in the little court-house of Carcoar. About fifty persons were present. It was performed by an Oxford gentleman, thus far from his *Alma Mater*.

When I revisited this secluded village, a handsome church stood on the hill, and a large parsonage near it. The cottage occupied by the former minister had been swept away, and the worthy pastor himself had gone to man's last resting-place;—whither, alas! he had been preceded by the excellent and amiable lady whose society formed the first charm, as her comfort and safety were the first care of her travelling companions on this tour and of the kindly colonists whose guests we were.

Thus it is, as we advance in life. Scarcely can we look back a few short years upon pleasurable occurrences in which we have been associated with a group of friends, without sadly reflecting that one or more of the well-remembered and perhaps well-beloved circle have been taken from its numbers; and without wondering why we ourselves should have been spared by the scythe of the destroyer.

CHAPTER X.

[1846.]

TRIP TO THE SQUATTING DISTRICTS—A BUSTARD BAGGED—AN OUT-STATION—THE DINGO—THE SHEPHERD AND THE STOCKMAN—WORKMEN, WAGES, AND WASTE OF FOOD—COURSING AND SHOOTING AT BANGAROO—BUSH BOARD AND LODGING—A BUSH BED AND BEDFELLOWS—A BUSH BEAUTY—A BUSH BATH—RAIN AND FLOODS—THE BELL RIVER—PASTORAL HOSPITALITY—PASSAGE OF THE MACQUARIE—WELLINGTON—CLEANLINESS *versus* DIRT—A KANGAROO HUNT—AUSTRALIAN VENISON—GUANAS—SNAKES—THE TREE-GRUB GASTRONOMICALLY CONSIDERED.

November 24th.—Trip from Coombing into the squatting districts, within and beyond the boundaries of location.

The projected trip, commenced this day, is to take in Bangaroo, the chief grazing station of our host on the banks of the Lachlan, whence we are to describe a circle round the Conobolas Mountains to Wellington, the chief town of the county so named, on the Macquarie River; and from thence through the pastoral districts of the western portions of Wellington and Bathurst back to Coombing. Most of the quarters we were likely to occupy on this extended tour being reported too rough for a lady's accommodation, our party on this occasion was exclusively male. We made an early start, and, setting our heads westward, jogged at a steady travelling pace of about six miles an hour through the apparently interminable bush.

About eight miles from Coombing, in a tolerably open part of the forest, my eye was attracted by the movement of some animal's head, which turned to look at us over a thicket not thirty yards from the road. It was a bustard, the first I had seen since the year 1829, on the plains of Bundelcund. No one perceiving it but myself, I allowed the carriage to proceed about a hundred yards, when, having put together my gun, I alighted, and, the bird rising, I got an unsuccessful shot, the charge taking an obstructing tree and cutting it in two. Away went the splendid bird through the tops of the gums, slowly flapping his enormous wings. Hastily dismounting a trooper, I jumped on his horse, followed at full speed, and soon had the satisfaction of marking down my quarry. Halting at a respectful distance, and quickly reloading, I attempted to convert my temporary charger into a stalking-horse. The brute, however, having an apparent antipathy to fire-arms and becoming unruly, I let him go, and back he went on our track all the way to Coombing. This incident caused a diversion favourable to my views; for the bustard gazed stupidly after the retreating steed, totally unaware that his real enemy was crawling up to him, like a chetah upon an antelope, screened by every intervening bush and hollow—when the snapping of a twig startled, too late, the unwary bird, and he had just lifted his body heavily into the air after running a few paces to catch the wind, when at about sixty yards the fatal cartridge pierced his head and neck in three or four places, and he fell dead. Being a fine young bird, weighing about fifteen pounds, he was sent back to Coombing as a present to the ladies.

After a drive of twelve miles we reached the residence of Mr. Rothery, a near connexion of our host, where we breakfasted. He possesses a comfortable cottage, with a good wide clearing round it, a very pretty wife, and a quiver full of those arrows which are very useful weapons in a colony, although at home they are apt to be somewhat burthensome. Mr. R. has a singularly fine breed of horses proceeding from a magnificent English sire—"Associate" by name—which had probably broke down too early in life to make a reputation on the English turf, and had been transported to New South Wales for his little mishap. Of course at some distant squattage browse the flocks and herds that support this establishment, and feed the numerous mouths—as yet too young to earn their own subsistence.

At 2 P.M. we halted at Canoindra—a station on the Belabula River, where in a half-finished hut and in a tremendous storm of rain we enjoyed a capital lunch provided by the forethought of Mr. Icely. Wet weather had evidently set in; but, however unpropitious was such a circumstance for our journey, it was impossible to regret that which would freshen up the parched earth, and probably save from starving thousands of sheep and cattle. The rain had been falling for many days here, for the rich alluvial plains over which we now prosecuted our journey were terribly heavy for our horses. The grass was two and three feet high on the spacious savannahs between the rivers Belabula and Lachlan, the trees growing in fine clumps and of enormous magnitude, with wide open pasturage between

them—very unlike anything we had previously seen in the country.

Here we came in sight of several bustards, flying in flocks of six or eight over the forest with slow and heavy wing, or stalking in twos and threes on the distant plain. Numerous bevies of quail arose from under our carriage wheels as we ploughed wearily through the deep loam. With our large and noisy cavalcade it was idle to hope to get within good shot of so wary a creature as the bustard on open ground. I brought one down indeed at a long distance; but the bird recovered and escaped. On a horse that will stand fire it is easy to approach and kill the bustard—still easier in a cart.

At 6 P.M., after twelve hours' work, we drew rein at Mr. Icely's station of Bangaroo, which is represented by a couple of ordinary huts built of split stuff and thatched with bark. One of these had been nicely whitewashed, and became our banquetting-hall by day, and at night the dormitory of his Excellency, his son, and myself. There was just room enough for the three little stretchers and the enormous fireplace. It was a night of united rain and heat, that made our lodging not unlike a forcing-house for orchidaceous plants. The rest of the party betook themselves to tents, which were quickly wet through. Nevertheless we all slept soundly through the night—for

> "Weariness can snore upon a flint,
> When resty sloth finds the down pillow hard."

Bangaroo is situated in a bight formed by the confluence of the rivers Lachlan and Belabula, which at

this point constitute the present boundary of the colony—properly so called. Beyond them are the "Unsettled Districts"—the waste lands, in which many thousands of the live stock of New South Wales find their subsistence, driven westward by the increasing demand for pasturage in a country where three or four acres are required to feed a sheep, and twice as many for an ox or horse. The run of Bangaroo contains an area of 16,000 acres. Its grazing capabilities, according to a Government return, are 1,000 cattle and 1,500 sheep. Our horses were as usual turned adrift, and seemed perfectly satisfied with their meals and bed of drenched grass. The Belabula, about fifty yards from the huts, afforded our beasts plenty of water in a chain of ponds which the heavy rains were just beginning to convert into a running stream. Enormous heaps of drift-timber proclaimed how furious are the torrents which occasionally force a channel along this now only too placid watercourse.

Most of the speculations of our worthy host are said to have proved remunerative, although he did not pass through the evil times of the colony without serious reverses. Since the time when we travelled over his broad lands on the Belabula, indications of copper have been discovered of so promising a nature as to induce a company to purchase one of his acres (probably bought by him for five shillings) at a price something like 2,000*l*. It was not long after that this "Belabula Mine" got the nickname of the Bubble-bubble Mine; but on account of what peculiarity I really do not know. About the same time, too, he bought a house and pro-

perty on the Paramatta River which he did not want, and sold them the next day, putting upwards of 1,000*l.* in his pocket by the transaction. It is thus that capital rolls up in the hands of a man of skill and ability. Unluckily sometimes, after having rolled up like a snow-ball, it melts as quickly. Mr. Icely was launched on the world in early youth with slender means, has won wealth and wide possessions by his own exertions; and, having attained them, he is liberal and hospitable without extravagance, and lives comfortably and handsomely without the smallest parade or ostentation.

November 25th.—Halted at Bangaroo. At the generality of grazing-stations each hut contains two shepherds and a hut-keeper. The folds are near the hut. The shepherds tend the flocks to their pastures by day, and bring them home at night. The hut-keeper cooks for the men, receives the sheep at night, and is answerable for them until morning. With the assistance of his collies, and a gun perhaps, he guards them against the attacks of the native dog, and what is worse, the native man. The mischief inflicted by the dingo is not confined to the mere killing a sheep or two. Sometimes at night this animal will leap into the fold amongst the timid animals, and so "rush" them—that is, cause them to break out and disperse through the bush,—when it becomes very difficult to recover them. I have heard that the dingo, warragal, or native dog, does not hunt in packs like the wolf and jackal; but occasionally two or three together have been known to follow on the scent of a stray foal or calf, and to catch and kill it in company.

Cattle keeping requires fewer hands than the care of sheep. The beasts are strong enough to take care of themselves by day and night—except when the blacks get among them and take their tithes, as they sometimes do in the far interior when kangaroos and emus are scarce. The stockman, as he who tends cattle and horses is called, despises the shepherd as a grovelling, inferior creature, and considers "tailing sheep" as an employment too tardigrade for a man of action and spirit. The latter sits all day "*sub tegmine* gum-tree," playing on the Jew's-harp or accordion; or sleeps supine, while his dog does his master's duty with one eye open. The importation and sale of the above instruments—substitutes for the ancient shepherd's reed—are immense. Five hundred accordions and fifty gross of the harps of Judah are considered small investments by one vessel. A shepherd has been known to walk 200 miles from a distant station of the interior, to purchase one of them at the nearest township.

The stockman lives on horseback. He has always a good horse—very likely has selected the best—horse in his employer's stud, and is the only person aware of his superior quality. He has need of a staunch and a fast horse, and one that is not afraid of a three-railed fence or a wild bullock's horn. The riding after cattle in the bush, for the purpose of driving them in or collecting them for muster, is very hard and sometimes dangerous work. It is so exciting an employment as not only to become a favourite one with stockmen, but of the bush-gentlemen; nay, the stock-horse himself is said to enjoy the sport—much as the high-mettled hunter at home,

when not distressed, seems to relish his gallop with the hounds. By this rough work, however, many a fine young horse has been broken down or "stumpt up" before he has shed his colt's teeth; and many a broken rib or limb has fallen to the stockman's share.

The stockman brags of his horse's prowess and his own, and, as I have said before, contemns the shepherd's slothful life. You know the stockman by his chin-strapped cabbage-tree hat, his bearded and embrowned visage, his keen quick eye. He wears generally a jacket and trowsers of colonial tweed, the latter fortified with fustian or leather between his thin bowed legs. But the symbol of his peculiar trade is the stock-whip—a thick but tapering thong of twelve or fourteen feet, weighing perhaps a couple of pounds, affixed to a handle of a foot and a-half at most. At the end of this cruel lash is a "cracker," generally made of a twisted piece of silk handkerchief, or, what is better than anything, a shred from an old infantry sash. The wilderness echoes for miles with the cracks of this terrible scourge, which are fully as loud as the report of a gun, and woe betide the lagging or unruly bullock who gets the full benefit of its stroke delivered by an experienced hand.

I have seen a pewter quart pot all but cut in two by one flank of the stock-whip. Practice alone gives the power of cracking this implement. It is as difficult as the use of the flail to the uninitiated, and is emphatically a bush accomplishment. The juvenile bush-brats apply themselves to its acquirement with grave devotion; and nothing pleases one of them more than to see the abortive and self-flagillating efforts of an adult in the infancy

of the art. Dandy amateur bushmen have the handle of their stock-whip made of the *Myál, Acacia pendula*, or violet wood, and are otherwise dainty about its ornaments. Myself did not fail to import to England a specimen of this implement—as an article of "*vertù*;" but I hereby give notice of my inability to afford instruction in the use of it.

In the earlier days of the colony—as the Attorney-General stated one day in the Legislative Council—the condition of shepherd or stockman was the only one aspired to by the Australian youth. At that time Government situations went a begging in favour of such employment. Those were, doubtless, the days when the gentlemen squatters played whist at sheep points and a bullock on the rubber; and remunerated a doctor for setting a broken limb (no other ailment is ever heard of in the bush) with a cow-fee.

Another important "hand" employed by the squatter is the bullock-driver—or teamster; he who conducts the huge wains full of wool from the station to the port for shipment, and brings back the yearly supply of stores. Through heat and dust, rain and mud, over rock and sand, plain and mountain, he plods his slow and weary journey of three or four months—never, perhaps, seeing the inside of a human dwelling during its monotonous continuance. With his blankets and mattrass, his iron pot and tin tot—stretched at night under the tarpaulin of his dray, with a smouldering log-fire before him, and his vigilant dog as sentry over his charge, his mind aspires not after higher luxuries. In spite of his rough and reckless character when unemployed, or only em-

ployed in spending his accumulated wages, and his sometimes barely human exterior, the bullock-driver is generally trustworthy to his employer—although occasionally his virtue does succumb to the temptations offered by a cargo of rum or tobacco. I could put my finger on more than one person engaged in this capacity who came out to the colony as men of birth, education, and capital, but, having been ruined by misfortune, misplaced confidence, or misconduct, have betaken themselves to an employment so uncivilized.

The worst feature of bush-labour is the almost exclusive employment of males. This is a remnant, of course, of the old convict system. The habit of engaging married couples to do the duty of shepherds and hut-keepers is, however, growing into use, and even children are made of service in carrying the rations to the men in charge of flocks. The wages of this class ranged very high during the whole period of my stay in the country—from 15*l.* to 25*l.* for shepherds, stockmen, and draymen; watchmen or hut-keepers, 15*l.* The usual ration allowed consists of 10 lbs. of meat, 10 lbs. of bread, ¼ lb. of tea, ¾lbs. of sugar, per week. Any extra supplies are booked against their wages.

It is needless to say that tobacco is an absolute necessary of the bush. High and low all indulge in smoking—smoking, solace of the empty head among the rich, of the empty stomach among the poor!

During busy seasons a handsome addition is given to the wages of those employed. All workmen lodge gratis, and at many farms or cattle stations where milk is plentiful a supply is furnished to them. Some of

them find time to cultivate a few vegetables. The bush affords them fuel "galore" for warmth and cooking. As for meat, it is such a drug that twice as much as the ration is often devoured or wasted. Alas! what a pity that some of the lusty paupers of the 10 or 11 per cent. of England's population receiving parochial relief are not sharing in the excessive abundance of these colonies, and giving their labour in return for it! What pity that the small capitalists, who are daily trenching on their principal under the pressure of rates, and taxes, and dear food, do not more frequently bring their money to a market, where with common industry they may make it the nucleus of a handsome competence, and meanwhile assist in the development of the still latent resources of the colony.

Trifling as this journal is, I feel some degree of responsibility in making remarks of the above tendency, because, as I have said before, it is not to be disputed that hundreds have met ruin in New South Wales, whether engaged in pastoral or other pursuits; and that, in the cases of some, no human exertion could have averted the catastrophe; yet I cannot but gather from all I have heard and read, that the mishaps of the majority are clearly traceable to the idleness, ignorance, or imprudence of the sufferers.

Halting at Bangaroo this day, the whole of our party went out, in different directions, in search of game. Some taking with them greyhounds rode a circuit of nearly thirty miles in hopes of getting a kangaroo, but only succeeded in killing two or three of the smallest kind, called the kangaroo rat. It is about the size of a

hare, and afforded pretty good coursing, although the ground, being rocky and scrubby, was very unfavourable for the sport. Others followed the bustard on the Plains. Owing to the wet weather these birds were more than usually shy. Although I found full a dozen of them I did not get a fair shot all day.

A curious instance occurred of the method in which the bustard conceals himself from observation — an instance by no means confirmatory of the old story of this bird, in common with the ostridge, hiding his head only and then fancying his whole body secure. Espying a very fine bird descending in his flight, I marked him down on flat, open ground about a mile distant, and immediately galloped to the spot. The grass was thin, and not six inches high. There was indeed one trifling bush or tuft which might have held a pheasant. I examined it at the distance of twenty yards, but feeling satisfied that it was not capable of containing an animal four feet high and weighing from fifteen to twenty pounds, I passed on, sorely puzzled; for, measuring my powers of marking a bustard by what I could do with regard to a snipe, I thought I could hardly be mistaken with the former. After proceeding about 100 yards, I returned with a feeling of doubt towards the tuft, when, sure enough, up jumped the mighty bird, and after two or three strides, took to his wings. I gave him a shot which broke his thigh for him, and might have broken my own neck, for my horse shied and plunged at the report, and for some time refused to be comforted. A stockman on a fast little horse pursued the stricken bird at full speed, and had almost reached him with his whip

when he rose again from a mound on which he had alighted, and with renewed strength swept out of sight.

Mr. Fitz Roy was more fortunate. Cantering home towards the station in the evening through the bush, a bustard started up almost under his horse's feet, and so slow was the bird in getting under sail that he had time to pull up, dismount, and make a successful shot before he was out of reach. This was a very fine bird, weighing upwards of twenty pounds.

November 26*th*.—Breaking up our quarters at Bangaroo, we retraced our steps amid a storm of rain across the beautiful parklike Plains, to Canoindra, with the intention to cross the Belabula at that point, in prosecution of our tour. Here a council was held as to the abandonment of, or the perseverance in the original plan of operations; for the roads in advance were merely bush tracks, easily rendered impassable by heavy rains, and traversed by many rivers and water-courses liable to floods. I gave the casting vote. "*En avant*," was the word; and, dashing through the mingled mud and water of the Belabula, the Governor, guided by the police, led the way across the heavy loam of an alluvial country, the rest following on his track. The whole day's journey was like a ploughing match; but in due course of time—without one moment's reprieve of the elements—we gained, after sunset, the little bush-settlement of the Clements Brothers.

Here, "far removed from noise and strife," except such as may arise among themselves, four of a family with their wives and children reside in as many slab-

huts, within a few hundred yards of each other. Would not experience predict family jars and disunion under such circumstances? I fear me the fraternal establishments so strongly bound to support each other in the solitude they had chosen, were not connected by such peaceful relations as the ties of blood should have warranted. Whether the Clements themselves or the Clements's wives were of inclement temperament I did not inquire, but the domestic atmosphere was manifestly cloudy, and doubtless the question of which of the four tenements was to shelter the person of her Majesty's representative, was calculated to bring on a storm.

The cottage allotted to the Governor, his son, and myself had evidently undergone some considerable beautifying in the expectation of its becoming a temporary palace. The windows were shaded by clean white dimity curtains, festooned with pink calico. A coarse but snowy table-cloth was spread on the old cedar table, and a regiment of ricketty chairs were drawn round the capacious newly whitewashed chimney-lug, in which crackled a cheerful wood-fire. All this, with a suit of dry clothes and a hot beaker of negus, after a substantial and wholesome meal, was far from unenjoyable, while the rain fell in ceaseless cadence on the bark roof, and splashed in torrents off the eaves.

Heavy rain in Australia is so completely an exception to the general rule, that I always contemplated it with that degree of interest and curiosity with which one observes a phenomenon of whatsoever sort. After a year or two in this country it becomes a new sensation to be wet through; and the grave adult feels as much

pleasure in personal experiments on a puddle as the street urchins in England appear to do.

The nuptial couch of the proprietors of the hut, with a green gauze mosquito net and a fine patch-work quilt, was decently spread for his Excellency. His secretary was accommodated with the sofa in the sitting-room, while myself was consigned to what appeared to be the dairy. I cannot enlarge on my share of enjoyment of the bed that fell to my lot, not being its only tenant by some thousands. I can only answer for myself. Suffice it, that I had rather for ever "press my pillow alone" than in such sprightly company, Odious, filth-engendered insect! There is bliss in shedding the blood of the guilty mosquito caught in the fact—though, after all, it is our own blood that we spill. There may be felicity in the cracking of a flea *in flagrante delictu.* But there is no retribution for the bug—his life and death are alike offensive!

I was too tired, however, to care for the discomforts of a bed consisting of a sheet of bark half a foot too short laid across tressels, and covered with a bag of chaff and vermin acting as a mattrass; for the night-winds blowing through my hair, nor for the rain-drops plashing on the earthen floor till a "water-hole" was formed large enough to float my slippers. So I slept until I was awakened, with a start, by a gentle pull at my counterpane. What sort of an adventure was this to turn out? I could see the grey dawn through the chinks in the split logs that formed the outer wall; and, carrying my eyes downward, I perceived a white object intruding through a crevice, and

clutching my bed-clothes. Jumping out of bed, I seized my stick, and was about to strike, when my visitor gave tongue in those well-known tones that saved the Capitol of Rome. It was indeed a goose: but why the bird took pleasure in nibbling a dirty rug through a hole in the wall, remains a mystery.

Our hostess was assisted in her household operations by a remarkably pretty girl, apparently about sixteen years of age, who I was surprised to see carrying a bouncing child which she said was her own. She was the daughter, it appeared, of one of the brothers, and the wife of a soldier serving in New Zealand. When I told her that the head-quarters of the regiment—for he was in the band—was on its way from the land of the cannibal to Sydney, the sunny beam of blushing delight which *ought* to have suffused the young bride's cheek at the unexpected news, would have fallen warmly on the heart of an old soldier and bachelor like myself. Unluckily for connubial sentiment—the deuce a beam was there! On the contrary, a dark cloud passed across the pretty countenance of the absent soldier's wife, and was succeeded by a deadly pallor.

On a much slenderer substratum than this, a "Loiterer," or a "Penciller-by-the-Way" might have founded his tale of "The Bush Bride of Mŏgŏng;" for such was the name of the sequestered settlement. There were whispers regarding the visits of a handsome stockman at the family hamlet—"one," perhaps, "who had blighted many a flower before." I closed my ears to the details; yet some months afterwards the *dénoûment* was, as it were, forced upon

me: the returned soldier was in hospital, mad, having lost his reason through repeated paroxysms of jealousy!

November 27th.—Duly roused at 4 A.M. by the before-mentioned early bird, I called up my fellow-traveller on the sofa; and, putting on our slippers, we repaired through the dusk of daybreak to a pool hard by, where plunging in we cooled our flea-bitten skins. The water seemed deliciously fresh to our feverish sensations, and I mention the trifling circumstance as a warning to inexperienced Australian travellers. The extreme muddiness of the rain-swollen water-hole, imperceptible in the dark, was a bagatelle; but we heard on returning to the house that the pool was full of horse-leeches, and that, but for the freshet of rain and our hasty bath, we might have suffered phlebotomy to an extent extremely inconvenient on a long journey.

During this day's work we occasionally came near the Belabula river, whose course was easily distinguishable by the dark selvage of casuarinas fringing its banks. It forms, at present, the frontier between the located and the unsettled districts, and will probably long remain so, unless the upset price of waste land be reduced.

Traversing a remarkably fine pastoral country, with a good deal of land well calculated for agriculture, we passed the grazing stations of Tolong and Roreecabon; making our mid-day halt for rest and refreshment at Boree-narang, the homestead of Mr. Barton, who gave us as hearty a welcome as a fine, English-looking, and I believe, English-hearted gentleman could offer, while

lying on his couch with a desperately fractured leg; his lady being prevented from appearing by a less melancholy cause of confinement.

The rain rattling down as though on purpose to convince the new Governor that the general colonial croak of "Drought, drought," was a thorough humbug,—a bugbear got up to frighten the Legislature out of further concessions to the "suffering squatters,"—onward we went through miles after miles of mud, always haunted by the doubt whether the next creek (as the fresh-water streams of the interior are absurdly called) would place a bar to our further advance.

At about five P.M. we found ourselves on the bank of the Mŏlong creek, which separated us from our destination for the night,—the Mŏlong Inn,—a lone house on the opposite plain. It was an ugly-looking turbid stream, of the consistency of pea-soup, with greasy and rotten banks. However, our night's lodging lay before us as well as the obstacle. Sir Charles, appearing to consider the circumstances such as to warrant the remark of the old huntsman to the "craning" rider—"The more you look at it the less you'll like it,"—pushed his tired team boldly at the brook; and, after a pause in the middle that looked very like sticking, the yellow drag was seen to emerge from the black slough, the last spot of its original colour completely blotted out.

A few minutes brought our cavalcade to the inn, where we were politely received by M. Hyeronimus, the host of the Mŏlong Hotel as well as of the chief hotel at Wellington, twenty-eight miles from this spot. A foreigner, civil and civilized, with a good deal of the courier-cut

about him, Mons^r. H. gave us excellent fare and beds, nor did he forget to charge for them.

The bar of the house was filled by a dozen of regular bush-boys—great hulking fellows, labouring under a temporary plethora of pay, and hanging about the rum butt until it should be spent. There was a fiddler, too, for their delectation; and these boisterous, half-drunken clowns continued to dance together the greater part of the night, apparently as much inspired by the cracked violin, "real Old Tom," and the rough-muzzled, fustian-clad partner, redolent of rum and "nigger-head"—indeed very much more inspired than I have often seen the white-waistcoated, patent-leather-booted dandy, with his Weippert, his iced Roman punch, and the belle of the season as his associate in the valtz.

These good fellows, uncouth as they appeared, were civil in their way, and did not persevere in their uproarious pastimes when told that the Governor and his party were tired and gone to bed. Many a large and rapid fortune has been made in New South Wales by publicans, from no other customers than such as those I have just sketched.

November 28th.—Up at four o'clock. A regular "old country" rainy day: "very dirty weather," as they say at sea. The carriages came out as dirty as they went in. The sky above was black as ink, the earth below black. The Governor looked black too, as he scanned the clouds and the soaked soil, and started his team with the prospect of twenty-eight miles to be run off the reel, and three flooded streams to ford.

During the last two days we had enjoyed various

fine views of the Canobolas Range, the highest peak of which is 4,500 feet. In a country so comparatively flat, we doubtless owed a good deal of the rain that fell upon us to the great surcharged cloud-butts that rested continually on the shoulders of these hills. It was a really fine tract of alluvial land we traversed this day. The grass was plentiful, and two or three feet high; the trees were more shapely, and less stag-headed than is the case in the sandstone districts.

We halted for an hour at the Head Station of the Messrs. Burton, where three brothers, living together, conduct the provincial part of the business, while a fourth attends to its interests at Sydney. The station is one of the simplest construction—a log-hut or two, bark roofed, for a dwelling-house, and some farm buildings somewhat more carefully put together. The locality is well chosen for grazing purposes, and there appears to be plenty of game in the neighbourhood; but the idea of comfort could hardly be connected in my mind with so homely a lodging and so few of the less absolute requirements of civilized life as are enjoyed by these gentlemen.

It is needless to say a word about the high spirits with which the plentiful supply of rain inspired every one we met. The drenching we had endured for four or five days we were glad to compound for in consideration of the benefit accruing from the same cause to all the farming interests.

We crossed three several times this day the river Bell. Each attempt was both hazardous and doubtful, and delayed us much; for the stream had overflowed its banks, (Australian rivers possess two sets of banks, one

for dry, another for wet seasons,) and the strength and depth of the water could only be proved by actual experiment,—a duty which devolved upon, and was well performed by, the troopers. The annexed Plate will give some idea of the plan adopted with perfect success at these perilous passages. The leaders, being unmanageable in deep rapid water, were taken off, and, with the police horses, assisted in carrying over to the opposite bank the servants, the policemen, and some of the gentlemen, and, with them, a stout green-hide rope, one end of which had been affixed to the carriage-pole. Sir Charles gallantly kept his seat on the box, myself standing on the seat behind him to help in case of need. When all was ready, the wheel-horses were urged into the stream; eight or ten men hawled on the rope, thus assisting in the draught and keeping the pole straight, and we were soon tumbling about, like a ship at sea, over stumps and stones, some of which were heard rumbling along the bottom of the current. However, after a brief struggle, Cæsar and his fortunes were safely delivered on the opposite shore.

As for the joint phaëton of the Colonial Secretary and myself, every article of baggage having been removed, my servant, sitting up to his waist in water, drove it across, assisted by the rope. Old "Merriman" looked more like a mer-man, as his long mane floated on the waves; and poor "Punch" was terribly diluted, his ears alone at one time remaining above the face of the waters.

At one of these fords an old settler, living on a bit of cleared land near it, stopped our progress by his well-timed advice to wait awhile for the partial sub-

sidence of the flood, which the tide-mark proved to be sinking. He brought us some black damper and a dry chip of cheese, (for we were famished,) together with a hot beverage in a tin pot which richly deserved the epithet of "post and rail" tea; it might well have been a decoction of "split stuff" or "iron bark shingles," for any resemblance it bore to the Chinese plant. Another notorious ration tea of the bush is called "Jack the painter." This is a *very* green tea indeed, its viridity evidently produced by a discreet use of the copper drying pans in its manufacture. Hunger is indeed the best sauce; for, sitting on a fallen log, and watching the gradual retrocession of the water-mark, like "Rusticus" awaiting the flood's recess, we discussed our damper and discoloured hot water with more appetite than many a better repast under more facile circumstances.

In recalling to mind, on subsequent occasions, the several perils by water encountered this day, it has always appeared to me that our escape from losing carriages, and horses, and even human life,—a loss that the smallest accident in so fierce a torrent must have rendered nearly inevitable,—was almost miraculous. The passages of the Bell, indeed, could not have been accomplished at all, but for the strong manual power of our party, assisted by persons sent to help us.

These sudden floods are one of the many scourges of the squatter—as destructive as the blacks, the dingoes, scab, catarrh, drought, or bush-fires. I read in a newspaper lately of a flock of 2,000 or 3,000 sheep being hemmed in, with a single shepherd, on an insulated patch of ground hardly wide enough for them to stand

upon. On the third day, (the poor sheep having long before nibbled off the very roots of the narrow pasture, and the shepherd having swallowed his last crust,) the latter plunged into the current, in the hope of reaching the mainland. His ductile and famished charge followed him to a sheep, the faithful colley followed the last of the flock, and shepherd, sheep, and dog were swept away together.

Accounts of loss of life in the bush generally follow news of heavy rains, and minor accidents are of every day occurrence. We hear of Commissioners of Crown Lands, or other itinerant gentlemen, being carried away in their gigs; losing one or more horses; and sometimes of their own lives being sacrificed, or only saved by the skill and intrepidity of the despised black fellow.

We saw a good deal of game to-day, four or five bustards, and several kinds of water-fowl; but there was too much rain and hard work to allow of our pursuing them.

At the third crossing of the Bell, we were met by Mr. Maxwell, our host for the night, who welcomed us to his flourishing sheep station of Narrigâl. The proprietor repairs to this place in the shearing season only, his chief homestead being far away elsewhere. He possesses, however, purchased land having eleven miles of water frontage to it on the located side of the river, and extensive runs on the opposite bank, the Bell here forming the frontier of the Colony proper. Mr. Maxwell has the reputation of being what is financially styled "a warm man." With such a mountain of wool as we saw piled under tarpaulins, he can hardly be otherwise. He had "lots of sheep," he said, (which probably

meant 30,000 or 40,000;) "but only a few head of cattle," (1,000, or so!)

The dwelling-house at Narrigâl is a mere shieling. The abodes of the servants, (as the performers of any kind of labour, domestic or agrarian, are called in Australia,) form a village street of whitewashed bark-huts, with stables, stack-yards, &c.; and a huge wool-shed, like a railway engine-house, in which (the bales having been for the purpose turned out) we dined sumptuously —claret, hock, champagne, and of course bottled ale, as plentiful as though our carouse had taken place on the banks of the "blue Rhine," the "arrowy Rhone," or the beery Trent, rather than on those of an Australian bush-river only a few years ago discovered by the enterprising surveyor, Mr. Oxley.

There was a large party of natives, men, women and children, camped behind the station, that is, squatted before a fire and behind a sloping sheet of bark turned from the wind,—in bush lingo, a break-weather,—or in guneeahs* of boughs thatched with grass. From the half-drunken looks of some of the men, the greedy begging of others, and certain indications of good understanding between their women and the station-men, (not a single white woman was to be seen there,) I set them down as one of the many families or tribes of the Aborigines who have nothing to thank the English for but demoralization and deeper degradation.

As for the Christian inhabitants of a squatting hamlet like the one I am describing, they may be

* Guneeah—hut of the black.

all honest men and trusty servants; but whether they have ever set eyes on a parson, their foot in a place of worship, or their minds upon the contemplation of a future state, can hardly be said to be a doubtful question.

November 29th.—Started early on horseback, and leaving the vehicles to follow, rode to Wellington, fifteen miles, through a fine rich valley of naturally clear pasture land framed in wooded hills. The road passes close to the famed caves of Wellington, where many curious fossil remains, specimens of which were sent home for the examination of Professor Owen, have been discovered. Mitchell describes, I think, three distinct caverns, full of fragments of bones, apparently belonging to a gigantic species of kangaroo. I entered the larger of the caves with another of the party, but having no better light than that procured by lucifers and a bit of bark, we could explore but little. The roof and sides are of limestone, with a floor of soft snuff-like dust, and a temperature, on a day of uncommon heat, cool as a catacomb.

We passed, *en route*, the ruined Apsley Mission station, whereof I have previously given some account, and where, I believe, a most patient experiment of several years' duration, and the united endeavours of two or three zealous Clergymen, did not produce as many true converts amongst these wild and intractable tribes. The situation of the abandoned establishment is beautiful and every way suitable for the habitation of civilized man. It was sad to trace the almost obliterated foundations of some of the buildings, and the deserted state

of others which slight repairs might still render habitable and useful; and to see the spacious gardens relapsing into wilderness. The Government had formerly in this fine valley a considerable stock-farm, and an establishment for the custody and employment of convicts.

After a delightful canter of about three hours across a country where a horse might well be left to his own pace and guidance, and where the falconer might follow his hawk without one glance at the ground under foot, we found ourselves stopped short at the confluence of the Bell with the Macquarie, just beyond which junction the township of Wellington stands. The latter river, the same that waters Bathurst about 150 miles to the eastward, had increased in importance very much since we last crossed its stream almost with dry axles—increased both from the tributaries it has received in its winding course, and from the late heavy rains. There was now no question of axles. The ordinary ford was quite impassable. Trees denoting its original rivage stood trembling in the midst of a rushing muddy torrent. A naked black attempted to swim our horses over, beginning with an old experienced bush-horse whose very experience taught him to refuse the doubtful voyage. So the project of passing them over was abandoned, and, saddles and bridles having been stripped off, the quadrupeds were turned loose into the luxuriant meadows within the loop of the two rivers. Ourselves and our saddles were transported, two by two, across the stream in a rudely-fashioned punt, trough, or quadrangular tub, with a pair of paddles—all which appa-

ratus looked as if it had been growing in the bush and in the full pride of leaves and life not half an hour before. Mr. Wright, formerly of H. M. army, the present Crown Commissioner for the district, who had been our very agreeable fellow-traveller for some days, received the Governor and his suite most handsomely at his residence just beyond the town.

The duties of Commissioner of Crown Lands are multifarious and important. He is general superintendent of the Crown's demesne, the waste lands of the colony; looks after the revenue, in so far as it depends upon depasturing licences and assessment of live stock; and as a government functionary and justice of the peace is in other points a potential person. This officer is furnished with a house, and is tolerably well paid.

The dwelling-house of the gentleman holding this post in the district of Wellington, although rude in structure, has all the neatness and order of a barrack. It is beautifully situated on a bend of the Macquarie, which here rolls between high banks, on the further of which Mount Arthur rears its wooded crest, dominating the Plains. Mr. Wright had erected a spacious temporary pavilion in addition to the not very liberal residence afforded him by the public; and, within its walls, this most comfortable of Australian bachelors afforded us practical proof that, even on the confines of civilization, a *cuisine recherchée*, with perfect cleanliness, may be obtained under the eye of an experienced and attentive master. Every part and article of furniture of the cottage shone with cleanliness. It was possible in this establishment to ask in the morning for a tub of water

without impressing the servants with the notion that you were about to fulfil the conditions of "every man his own washerwoman," or to perform some rare experiment in hydraulics. The plate, linen, and servants' dress were neatness itself. Such-like domestic observances are too much lost sight of in the bush—more's the pity, because they cost nothing, and without cleanliness household comfort is a word of mockery. If in some of the Australian houses in which I have temporarily lodged a couple of hours a-week were devoted to domestic purification, it is fair to suppose that the travelling guest from cleaner quarters would escape the endurance of a severe course of practical entomology, which, science and joking apart, becomes a serious affair when pursued through a week of wakeful nights.

The township of Wellington is 117 miles from Bathurst, and 238 miles from Sydney; from which city it is the most distant settlement directly inland, or to the westward.

Nothing can give a clearer impression of the vastness of the insular continent of New Holland, and of the comparative insignificance of its occupancy by civilized man, than the taking on a map a step of the compasses from Sydney to Wellington, and from thence describing a stride of that instrument across the unknown wilderness of the interior to the settlement of Swan River on the western coast. The step would cover, as the crow flies and the compass walks, hardly 200 miles, the stride not less than 2,300 miles! From north to south the measurement is computed at 2,000 miles. New Holland is indeed a cruelly compact mass of earth.

Look at its form on the map, and pursue with your eye the coast line; there is scarcely an indentation on the whole circuit of sufficient magnitude, nor a river of sufficient importance, to assist in the least degree the explorer in penetrating its distant and mysterious interior regions.

November 30*th*.—This day was devoted by some of the resident gentlemen of the vicinity to an attempt to show the Governor the sport, *par excellence*, of the country,—kangaroo hunting. Under their guidance, accordingly, well-mounted and accompanied by three or four greyhounds of a powerful breed, we traversed a wide extent of forest-land where in ordinary seasons this animal was known to abound. In a long day's ride, however, we only found one kangaroo, fortunately a good specimen of that kind known as a red-flyer, a strong and fleet animal not less than five feet high. The bush was tolerably open, hampered only by fallen timber and occasional rocky or boggy bits. The find was very fine. The kangaroo, which was feeding in a patch of long grass, jumped up under our horses' feet, and at first starting looked very much like a red-deer hind. Its action was less smooth though equally swift; but no one could have guessed that it consisted only of a series of jumps, the fore-feet never touching the ground. A shrill tallyho from one of the finest riders I ever saw made all the dogs spring into the air. Two of them got away on pretty good terms with our quarry, and, while facing the hill at a pace considerably greater than an ordinary hunting gallop, I thought we should have had a "whoo—whoop!" in less than five minutes. After

crossing a ridge and commencing the descent on the opposite side, however, the red-flyer showed us quite "another pair of shoes," and a pretty fast pair too. I never saw a stag in view go at all like our two-legged friend; and, in short, after a sharp burst of twelve or fourteen minutes, both dogs and men were fairly distanced. In about half that time I had lost my place by riding at full speed into the fork of a fallen tree concealed in long grass, a predicament out of which there is only one means of extrication, namely, retreat; for cavalry has no chance against a good abattis. The Australian gentlemen present rode with snaffle bridles pretty nearly at full speed, through, under, or over the forest trees, according to their position standing or prestrate, the great art being, it should seem, to leave the horse as much as possible to his own guidance. On the whole, taking into consideration the hardness of the ground, the stump-holes, sun-cracks and deep fissures caused by water, the stiffness of the underwood and the frequency of the trees, living, dying, and dead, burnt and burning, the riding in a kangaroo hunt may be considered tolerably dangerous. It affords, in short, to English manhood that quantum of risk which seems to form the chief seasoning of the dish called sport. In a good run with fox-hounds your person, on a race-course your purse, are just sufficiently jeopardized to promote a pleasing degree of excitement.

The dogs employed to-day were in no condition to cope with a "red-flyer," or "old soldier," as a large kind of kangaroo is called, on good ground. In deep ground, either is soon caught by really good dogs.

I think I perceive the reason why the animal always, if possible, takes a down-hill course when pursued. The hare, which, like the kangaroo, has very long hind-legs, prefers running up hill, but she makes good use also of her fore-legs. At full speed the kangaroo's fore-feet, as I have said, never touch the ground, and therefore, in going down hill he has more time to gather up his hinder limbs to repeat his tremendous spring than he could have in facing an ascent. I wish I had had time to measure the stroke of the "old-flyer" we chased to-day when at his best pace. I am convinced it would have equalled the well-known stride of the great "Eclipse."

The G. M. on the shoulder of the horse in my sketch will give an idea of the disfiguring manner in which Australian horses are branded by their breeders.

At bay, the kangaroo is dangerous to young and unwary dogs from the strength with which he uses the long sharp claw of his hind foot, a weapon nearly as formidable as the wild boar's tusk. The animal, when hard pressed, not unfrequently takes to a water-hole, where from his stature he has a great advantage over the dogs, ducking them under water and sometimes drowning them as they swim to the attack. The tail of the kangaroo makes excellent soup; the haunch is tolerable venison, but, like most really wild venison, it is too lean. A good bushman, or a black, knows, however, where to find a certain portion of fat when he is about to make a hunter's dish, which might with propriety be called an Australian kabaub. The directions are as follows:—Skewer, or *skiver* (to use my informant's



stronger word), skiver alternate slices of lean and fat on your ramrod, roast at a fire that any native will make with two sticks, or yourself with a flash of gunpowder, (if you have no match-box;) and if you happen to be hungry you will not require knife or fork, salt, pepper, or pressing. Kangaroo "steamer" is another bush-dish —a sort of haggis of venison and salt pork, very popular with those who have time and patience for the culinary process called simmering.

An officer from Van Diemen's Land told me that he had once killed in that colony a kangaroo of such magnitude, that, being a long way from home, he was unable, although on horseback, to carry away any portion except the tail, which alone weighed 30 lbs. This species is called the boomah, and stands about seven feet high. Besides the single kangaroo, we saw this day no other animals with the exception of a few kangaroo rats, which the dogs occasionally bounded after with little success among the scrubby rockland, two large guanas, about two feet long swarming lazily up a tree, one of which a black fellow brought down dead with a cast of his boomerang, and a poisonous ash-coloured snake, which I cut in pieces with my hunting whip under my horse's legs.

There were also a good many quail, which, as we flushed them, were swooped at by a large black falcon that kept his place near us on the march, now on a tree, now on the wing—and thus shared our sport. In the grass lands a sort of ground pigeon, called the dudu, a very handsome little bird, got up and went off like a partridge, strong and swift; and re-alighted on the

ground, running into cover. I never saw the bird except on this occasion.

Our hunt led us through some fine tracts of forest pasture. The "intervals," as alluvial flats near rivers are called in Canada, were extremely rich. The trees too were of the most majestic proportions. I measured the girth of one of these bush Falstaffs, and found it no less than thirty-three feet.

Along the surface roots of the largest trees, the soil, we observed, had been turned up as if by swine. This is done, as we were told, by the blacks in their search for a species of grub, a favourite article of food with them, and reported to be quite as palatable as marrow. There is something truly revolting in the idea of eating a great white maggot; the very thought makes one shudder; yet, after all, the man who first tested the qualities of the raw oyster, "ripped untimely" from its mother shell, was no less adventurous than the grub-eating Australian savage. Poor blackey! although the white usurper will exterminate, devour, or drive away your kangaroo, emu, and wallabi, and shoot you if you indulge in mutton chops in return; I do believe he will leave you in undisputed possession of your tree-grub—the only grub in which the British maw cannot follow you; except indeed human steaks, which, I imagine, have never yet been deliberately eaten by white man—although it is notorious that dogs, cats, and horses, in unrecognised forms, do occasionally find their way into the London meat-market.

CHAPTER XI.

[1846.]

FIRST OF DECEMBER IN AUSTRALIA—HOW TO STOP A FIGHT—PASTORALS, REAL AND IDEAL—SUMMERHILL—A RIGHT LOYAL RECEPTION—A MOONLIGHT TRIP—GOLD IN PROSPECTU—A FLYING SQUIRREL—BRUCE DALE—QUAILS AND MANNA—A DINNER—A DANCE—A DESERTER—MILITARY CONVICTS—AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A WAITER—HORSES FOR A RIDE AND A DRIVE, HOW OBTAINED—SNIPE SHOOTING—PIPER'S FLAT—BUNGARABEE—A SUICIDE—SYDNEY.

December 1st.—My English friends may perhaps imagine that on this first day of December I am blowing my fingers—as THEY are. Nor would they indeed be wrong; for I am blowing them, as the Satyr's guest in the fable did to cool his porridge. An Australian bard sings—

> "While hot December's sultry breeze
> Scarce moves a leaf on yonder trees."—LANG.

and this day was a smoking hot one.

I would describe the town of Wellington if I could: but what can be said of a town where there are scarcely two houses within a stone's throw of each other, and every second one is a public-house?

In the morning we retraced our steps to Mr. Maxwell's station at Narragâl, fifteen miles, where we resumed the carriages, and continued our retreat to Coómbing through the squatting districts of Wellington and Bathurst, thereby travelling over fresh ground. The most difficult part of the road was the first few miles from Narragâl—the ascent of the Mumble Hill, which could never have been accomplished without the aid of Mr. Maxwell's bullock teams. Six oxen were added to the Governor's vehicle, and four to mine; by this means they were dragged slowly but surely to the top of this nearly precipitous mountain, our worthy host thus speeding the parting guest at the rate of about half-a-mile an hour.

Our party were indebted for our supper and beds this night, and our breakfast the following day, to the hospitality of two squatting establishments. The gentlemen were away at Sydney with their wool; but it was impossible very deeply to lament an absent landlord, when landladies so very agreeable remained at home. Perhaps it was in consequence of the absence of the master that in the former of these houses there arose, after our retirement for the night, a glorious disturbance among the menials. The scene was the kitchen, towards which my bedroom looked; and both sounds and sights announced a serious affray. Pulling on my boots again I proceeded through the back-door to the spot, and found two rough-looking fellows fighting, or rather sparring, in the midst of screaming women and crashing crockery. I saw at a glance that the combatants devoutly hoped in their hearts that my interference was intended to promote peace: but no, my object was to save our kind landlady's

property—not their eyes and noses; and I read in their looks bitter disappointment when I simply invited them to finish their set-to behind the stable by the bright moonlight, and offered myself to see fair play These pugnacious fellows shook hands immediately!

During the early part of the next day, December 3d, our guides fairly lost their and our way. We got into a boggy tract of country, and became seriously apprehensive lest the carriages should permanently stick fast. The position was far from pleasant, for we had no provisions, and our next halting-place was at some distance. Horsemen were sent out in different directions in search of a track. At length, sweeping the dreary prospect with eager eye, I discovered a moving object. It was a sheep;—there was a flock—and near them I found a young girl seated on a log. A youthful shepherdess tending her snowy and bleating charge under the sylvan shades of the forest, sounds highly romantic and charming. One recals at once the sighing swains and tender maids of Arcady the Blest, and the Strephons and Floras of pastoral song.

In this case there was no room for sentiment, except that of pity for the poor girl and anxiety for our own situation. She seemed half idiotic, answering not a word to my inquiries, but pointing to a distant hut. And indeed in any case, especially when nearer large towns, the Australian traveller had best take heed how he indulges pastoral visions in the bush. The only Flora he is likely to meet with may be one from a bludgeon or bullet at the hand of some black-muzzled ranger from behind a gum-tree, which will either bring him to his

senses, or knock them out of him! Not that my warning is of any urgency as addressed to the majority of the people of New South Wales, the safety of whose persons is hardly likely to be imperilled by undue indulgence in sentimental emotions or romantic abstractions.

The father of the poor little shepherdess having guided us into the right road to Summerhill, at which place we were to bait, we soon drew near that little settlement; and at about half a mile therefrom a deputation of some thirty horsemen advanced to meet the Governor, and conducted him to a very tolerable inn where we received and digested a loyal address and an early dinner. Little thought his Excellency—little thought the good folks who were welcoming him with every showy demonstration in their power—that our meeting at Summerhill in 1846 took place on a "field of the cloth of gold!" It was not until 1851 that, in the bed of the Summerhill Creek, not far from this spot, gold was first found, and first announced to the public of New South Wales.

While we were regaling ourselves in the parlour of the inn, affairs at the bar of the house were going on with spirit. The health of her Majesty's representative, and of each other, was repeatedly and enthusiastically drank by the deputies; and when our progress was resumed, it had become a kind of bacchanal triumph. The plump and ruddy individual who took command of the escort ought to have been mounted on a leopard and crowned and cincted with vine-leaves. It was wonderful to see the strength and balance with which he kept his seat in spite of his potations. His aide-de-camp was nearly as remarkable in the same line. It was clear that both had

practised equitation and inebriety as twin sciences, from their boyhood upwards.

In the centre of a dozen jets of mud splashed up by our zealous guardians, our cavalcade passed out of Summerhill under a pair of gorgeous banners sustained by two standard bearers standing, or, more properly, staggering opposite each other, and apparently on the worst of terms. I heard one of them, a little old native of the land of pat-riotism, conclude a volley of abuse discharged at his *vis-à-vis* by contemptuously denouncing him as "a bloody immigrant!"—thereby leaving the hearer to infer that the speaker was himself a "Government man," that his rival was a free man, and that it was disgraceful for any one to come to this country except in pursuance of the sentence of a court of criminal jurisdiction. One of the flags bore the motto,

"Welcome, noble Charlie!"

the other,—

"Here's to the gale
That fill'd the sail
That brought the patriot to our shores!"

What wonder that the bearer was a sheet or two in the wind!

We were just getting somewhat tired and bored with our equestrian companions who continued to canter by the sides of the carriages, when, just as one of them had sworn eternal friendship to myself and good fellowship with all mankind, and had repeatedly wrung my hand at the risk of his neck, a largish house hove in sight; a sign-post stood before it; it was a public-house, "licensed to retail fermented and spirituous liquors."

To our great relief, this apparition put an immediate, a natural, and a general termination to the attendance of our well-meaning friends.

Passing over the rich lowlands of "King's Plains," we reached at 7 P.M. the snug country inn of Mr. Doyle; and here a council was called on the question of remaining there for the night, or pushing onwards the fifteen miles to Coombing. "Forward" was once more the verdict, and accordingly we enjoyed—the enjoyment somewhat doubtful—a most beautiful moonlight drive through forest, swamp, and swollen creek, over crackling branches and soughing mud, brier and brake, sand and rock; and for some miles through the "burnt fathers" of the bush—a large tract just passed over by fire, subdued but not extinguished by the rain; and in four hours and a half, at one o'clock of the night, we thankfully reached Coombing;—"and so to bed with great content," as old Pepys cozily expresses himself. Thus, with a good day's work of nineteen hours was concluded our circuit of 230 miles round the Canobolas Mountains and the pastoral districts at their feet. This range has since been discovered to be the axis of an immense gold field.

In the spring of the year 1850, when I paid a second visit to Mr. Icely, this night journey would have been impossible. During the preceding winter, or, rather, at the close of it, so heavy and unusual a fall of snow had taken place that the whole face of the country round about was strewn with branches broken down by the weight of the drifts. Many of these disjected members of the gnarled old gum-trees were thicker than a man's

body; and so completely were the bush-pastures cumbered with the *débris*, that the area of grazing ground was seriously diminished; nor could it be restored until the whole of the fallen timber had been burnt off—a dangerous remedy to adopt. The oldest blacks had never seen the like before; they were alarmed, and their lives endangered, by the continual and general downfal of boughs during two or three nights. The poor wretches could find no safe shelter from the chilly storm, for every tree might be a traitor.

If the ordinances of Nature permitted heavy snows to fall upon the English oak or elm in full leaf, they would probably fare no better than did the eucalyptus in this case. The holly, on the contrary, bears, uninjured, leaf, fruit, and snow together. Experienced bushmen seldom sleep under a large gum-tree, well knowing the dangerous brittleness of the branches.

This part of the country, so destitute of humidity, has rarely been seen under such flattering circumstances as distinguish it at present, the unusually heavy and continuous fall of rain having made it one sheet of verdure. It was easy to see that the squatters were alarmed lest the new Governor should imbibe, together with the numerous wettings he got, too high an idea of the natural wealth of the soil, and thus form too low an estimate of the risks and difficulties of their position, with reference to his future legislation. It must not be forgotten that Sir Charles's inland tour took place in 1846, previously to the cession of further privileges of tenure, &c. to the stock proprietors, as conferred by the present regulations.

In the subsequent visit to Coombing which I have

alluded to, I found the worthy proprietor, in addition to his other avocations of squatter, landed proprietor, member of the Legislative Council, &c., had got yet another iron in the fire; but he was introducing it so cautiously as to run little risk of burning his fingers, an accident which has befallen many dabblers in mining. Within 200 yards of his dwelling he had discovered a rich lode of copper, and had got well down to it at fifty or sixty feet.

Amongst other mineralogical curiosities, Mr. Icely showed us on this occasion two or three minute specimens of a "metal more attractive"—of gold in a quartz matrix, found on his own estate, so minute as to be clearly visible only through a microscope. He produced also from his cabinet a letter—I forget whether printed or in manuscript—from the hands of Sir Roderick Murchison, dated some time back, in which he states, with reference to a specimen sent home by Mr. Icely, that the precious metal is found in the Ural Mountains in a like deposit, and under similar geological conditions; and expresses an opinion that the western slope of the Australian Cordillera would be found highly auriferous.*

Here was an actual specimen of Australian gold, and the judgment of England's first geologist that it existed in abundance on or near the spot where we stood. In September 1850, an almost invisible speck of native gold was displayed to me with evident signs of exultation by a resident of the Bathurst district: in July 1851, at the town of Bathurst, a single specimen of Australian

* Closer reference to this subject will be found at letter C of the Appendix, p. 428, vol. iii.

gold, weighing upwards of one hundredweight, was exhibited to me!

December 4th.—We bade adieu to our very kind and agreeable hosts of Coombing, and started early on our return towards Sydney. .. This day's journey was to terminate at Brucedale, the country seat of Mr. William Suttor, member for Bathurst, about eight miles from that town. Threading the usual number of gum-trees, we performed a very satisfactory day's journey, wholly without accident except that of his Excellency's carriage passing an hour up to the axles in a boggy bit of ground, from whence it was at length retracted by a stout cart-horse borrowed from the only dray we saw on the road. The driver harnessed his beast by chain traces to the back of the vehicle; and with one "gee up" the carriage was released and placed on firm ground, every article of baggage having previously been removed. This mishap arose from leaving the beaten track: the soil of the bush is usually rotten after continued wet weather.

Amongst other game we saw to-day several flying squirrels. Mr. Fitz Roy succeeded in killing one with a ball from a policeman's carbine. It is a beautiful little animal; its fur very dark coloured and soft; and its floating mode of flight from tree to tree, supported on the membrane stretching between its fore and hind-legs, is extremely graceful and singular.

Our route took us once more across the Plains of Bathurst; leaving which town on our right, and driving about four miles over those famous downs, we re-plunged into the bush, and, gradually ascending some four miles more, emerged, late in the afternoon, after a journey of

eleven hours, at Brucedale. The house is large and commodious, situated on a knoll which pushes itself into the midst of a richly cultivated vale, through which winds the pretty little Windburndale rivulet. The prospect is bounded, at the distance of half a mile or thereabouts, by wooded hills, highly picturesque and making the position of the place romantically sequestered. Yet this is precisely one of the faults I find with the home scenery of New South Wales. To be shut up in a forest, with no outlet for the eye, gives me always a sense of mental suffocation. Thus situated, I should never lay down the axe until I had obtained a vista of sufficient extent to take a long breath in.

On the summit of one of the ridges enclosing Brucedale there is a singular agglomeration of granite rocks, called the Woolpacks,—a name as obvious to the squatter who bestowed it as appropriate to the objects named. I had an opportunity of visiting these singular crags,—great cubic blocks, piled so loosely one upon another as almost to shake in the wind. The detritus of these hills affords excellent soil for the vine. The climate also favours it; and whereas this plant, though stimulative and assuasive of human thirst, is itself not greedy of moisture, there will doubtless be good wine produced here some day, for the grapes are beautiful. If my gustative acumen is worth anything that day had not arrived in 1846. In 1850, when I had the pleasure of visiting Brucedale again, it had certainly dawned, if not reached its meridian.

Near the Woolpacks we found two kinds of natural bush-fruit, growing in great plenty on the uplands,—

namely, the "five corners," produced by a beautiful species of fuchsia after the fall of the blossom, and the geebung, a native plum, very woolly and tasteless. With regard to the former flower, the children of Mr. Suttor taught me to find at the bottom of each calyx a single drop of the richest honey-water; and we sipped together some hundreds of these fairy cups of hydromel. Depending from some of the larger gum-trees were the most enormous mistletoes I ever saw. One or two of the clusters of this parasite were so uniform in shape as to look like a huge oval chandelier of bronze, (for that was their colour,) hanging plumb down from some slender twig.

In the lowlands here, as at Coombing, the *Eucalyptus mannifera*, or Flooded gum, grows in great profusion and to a majestic size. It sounds strange to English ears,—a party of ladies and gentlemen strolling out in a summer's afternoon to gather manna in the wilderness: yet more than once I was so employed in Australia. This substance is found in small pieces on the ground under the trees at certain seasons, or in hardened drops on the surface of the leaves. It is snowy white when fresh, but turns brown when kept like the chemist's drug so called, sweeter than the sweetest sugar, and softer than Gunter's softest ice-cream. The manna is seldom plentiful; for birds, beasts, and human beings devour it, and the slightest rain, or even dew, dissolves its delicate components. Theories have been hazarded and essays published as to the origin of this singular substance; but whether it be formed by the puncture and deposit of an insect, or is the natural product of the

tree, no one, I believe, can venture to assert. Nor was there wanting hereabouts another special article of the heaven-sent food of the wandering tribes of Israel; for hundreds of quails were to be found within a few paces of the manna-fields.

Mr. William Suttor is one of the second generation of the name settled in the colony. A third is rising pretty rapidly. His father, a venerable and highly intelligent gentleman, whose acquaintance, also, I had the pleasure of making on this occasion, having established himself originally on an estate granted to him by Government near Paramatta, sent forward his son, still in his teens, to superintend the squatting stations in the Bathurst district. In like manner, the branches, as well as the property, of the family having subsequently increased, some of the younger scions are now about to join a party of other youths on an expedition to seek for locations for flocks and herds, and to take charge of them when established, on the Bargan River, far in the interior. Our host, who appears to be one of those men well calculated to grapple with difficulties, and to make none, gave me some interesting details connected with his early occupation of the country. Surrounded with convict servants, and with numerous tribes of the Aborigines, he never had any trouble with either. Doubtless, his treatment of both was firm, just, and consistent. The mutual relations of these two classes were, however, not so peaceable. Frequent collisions took place, in which blackey of course fared the worst; yet, on one occasion, no less than seven white men fell under their spears.

Not so favourably impressed with the qualities of assigned prisoner servants was the lady of Brucedale. In the occasional absences of her lord from home in those days, she passed many an hour of uneasiness and fear, lest these already branded knaves should break out into the commission of some dreadful outrage.

Mr. Suttor, on the first discussion of the transportation question by the Legislative Council in 1850, spoke strongly and voted as an "anti." Our late host, Mr. Icely, who is a nominee member, or one appointed by the Government, voted as a "pro." Both, as far as I know, are educating their families with a view to permanent settlement in the colony; and they seem somewhat similarly situated as to property and pursuit. Mr. Suttor possesses very considerable property in land and live-stock; and has discovered copper, lead, and even indications of gold on his estate. He prudently contents himself, however, at present, with the superficial produce of the earth.

A party of some thirty-five ladies and gentlemen from Bathurst and the neighbourhood dined at Brucedale this day to meet the Governor; and about forty more came to a dance in the evening. During the dinner, I found myself very assiduously waited on by a servant belonging to a gentleman present. His face was familiar to me; but where, when, or how we had met before I had no recollection. During the noise and bustle occasioned by the ball, he drew near me, and, whispering, said, "Don't you know me, Sir? Don't you remember James ——? I was six years in your company in the 43d."

I immediately recalled to mind that this man had

been transported *for life* by a general court-martial for deserting from the regiment at Niagara during the Canadian rebellion in 1838. In 1846, I (the Deputy Judge Advocate, as it happened, of the court which tried him) find the disgraced and dishonoured soldier, who was "marked with the letter D, and transported as a felon for the term of his natural life," now the trusted, well-paid, and well-fed domestic servant of a wealthy colonist! Is not this fact a direct premium for "mutiny, desertion, and all other crimes," for which transportation is awarded by a military tribunal? How this fellow and felon must chuckle over the loyal soldier who toils through the world, following his colours, for 1*s*. a-day, while *he* gets his 20*l*. or 30*l*. a-year, food, and lodgings, and can go where he lists over this wide continent,—to which thousands of the poor and honest labourers of England would joyfully repair, could they afford the cost of passage and outfit, both of which were furnished to this criminal at the public expense! Reformation, I admit, is one of the intended results—the best, perhaps—of transportation; but example is also requisite; and unquestionably this man's improved condition by "desertion before the enemy" (for American "sympathisers" were the worst enemies a soldier could have to deal with!) is a somewhat dangerous fact for discussion in a barrack-room, when duties happen to be heavy or officers severe. Mr. Deserter —— was very much inclined for conversation with his former captain; but I told him, that, as an officer in her Majesty's service, I could hold no communication with one who had forsaken his colours and broken his oath.

This individual had at least been caught, tried, and *quasi* punished; but it has been my lot to encounter and recognise several times in foreign countries soldiers in a state of desertion who had never been captured, and who could afford to laugh in the face of their former officer. I have seen them in private service, as thriving settlers, as miserable beggars, as musicians in theatres, and as bandsmen—as well as in the ranks—of the United States army. The left-hand man of my own company wheeled my baggage by my side as porter of an American hotel, just a quarter of a mile from the British outposts in Upper Canada. Ruxton mentions that he met deserters from our army on the far prairies of the Kansas River, harbouring with the Shawnees and Kickapoo Indians. I heard myself of such men domiciled with the New Zealand savages, married to Maori women, and tattooed like the barbarians.

Military crimes are thought nothing of in New South Wales. Men who have been transported for committing such are high in the labour market and eagerly sought for. A wide distinction is drawn between him whom a breach of discipline has made a felon, and him who has gained that title through a civil court for robbery, burglary, perjury, forgery, or other offences against society at large. The soldier who, once or twice a year, scales the barrack walls and makes away with his kit in order to raise funds for a nocturnal spree, and in a paroxysm of pot-valour trips up the heels of the fat sergeant who is testing his sobriety by putting him through his facings;—or who punches or threatens to punch the head of the corporal of the picquet which

captured him—is, in the martinet's eye—indeed in that of every good soldier—a terrible and unpardonable delinquent. Perhaps when grown a year or two older and wiser, the very qualities of spirit and flesh which induced these disorders would render him eligible for the posts of constable, policeman, overseer, watchman, or such other as a Colonial Government or private employer, in times of scarcity of labour, has great difficulty in filling.

This very scarcity and dearness of labour, which has subsisted for so many years in the colony and which certainly did not decrease during the five years of my sojourn there, present a powerful temptation to desert. Crimps are active and unscrupulous; and when a half-drunken private, known to be a tolerable handicraftsman, is promised ensign's or even lieutenant's pay—and moreover gets it; what wonder that he should forget the obligations he subscribed to in his attestation? And should his conscience afterwards urge him to return to his allegiance, he can only do so through the gates of a military court. He has had a taste of liberty; and finds it difficult to stomach the idea of guard-rooms and courts-martial, imprisonment, or perhaps a sentence of transportation which condemns him to work in irons with a gang of thieves.

The facility with which, up to a very late period, soldiers transported to these colonies obtained in Van Diemen's Land, while serving their terms, appointments of trust and emolument under Government, was so notorious, that several men committed felonies with the express and privately avowed purpose of relieving

themselves from their military responsibilities by becoming convicts. When, however, this trick became somewhat stale and apparent, one or more of the performers were met by a sentence of the lash, followed by imprisonment with hard labour, in lieu of transportation; and in 1849 the present Governor of the latter colony, at the instance of the local military authorities, signified publicly his intention to carry out to the full extent the sentence awarded by a court-martial in such cases—where transportation was awarded—granting the prisoner neither passes, tickets-of-leave, nor other indulgences.

I met with, in this colony, more than one deserter or other delinquent from our military service, who, having served the period of their sentence, are now doing well and living as respectable and useful citizens. But there was one case that came to my knowledge, so singular that I am tempted to insert a notice of it here, rather than admit it in its more strictly appropriate place; because I am unwilling to point too directly to the person in question.

In 1850, when proceeding with my wife on an excursion into the provinces, a gentleman recommended us to pass a day or two at a certain rural inn, where the climate was considered cool, and where, as he said, "old John ——, the waiter, will take excellent care of you and make you very comfortable, if you mention my name." Accordingly we soon became very good friends with John, whom we found to be a little weazened old fellow, quick and intelligent, although evidently declining in strength, most attentive to our comforts, a first-rate cook (for he performed that office in the absence

of the hired one), and full of amusing anecdotes and proverbs *à la Sancho.* I believe I must admit that, with all his estimable qualities, rogue was so indelibly written in his countenance, that although it belied his present character it was still impossible to look in old John's face and feel (however one might place) implicit trust in him. I knew nothing of him further than that his life had been an adventurous one; and one evening while sitting over our tea, which the old fellow had embellished with some regular English-inn buttered toast, I asked him to give us his history—for he had just told me that he had served "a little" in the army. He was nothing loth; and I took down the following "Autobiography of a New South Wales Waiter," nearly in his own words; nor have I since taken the trouble to test his dates and facts.

"I was born," began John, "in the island of North Shetland, and was, as early as I can remember, and long before I could lift an oar, employed in the ling-fishing trade. In 1806–7, I was in Greenland, where I served a short apprenticeship in whaling. In 1808, when at North Scalloway, plying in my father's boat, I was pressed by a man-of-war's tender. I ran from the press-gang the very same day, and went and enlisted with a party of artillery stationed in the fort. Marched with them shortly afterwards to Aberdeen, and was employed there and at Glasgow recruiting, for some time. Being considered too short for the artillery, I was transferred to the 1st Royals, and joined their 4th Battalion in December 1808, on their return from Corunna. I embarked with them July 1809 in the

Revenge (74), Captain Paget, for Flushing—the second expedition. Landed under Colonel Hay, and assisted at the taking of five batteries. Was wounded in the head by a musket-shot the day before the town surrendered. Came to England, and was placed in hospital at Harwich.

"In January 1810 I was sent with the force to Portugal, and was landed in the Black Horse Square, Lisbon, where we were brigaded. Thence we went by water to Santarem; afterwards to Thomar. I was at the battle of Busaco, and the subsequent retreat to the Lines. In 1811 I was present at the affairs of Pombal and Sabugal; at Almeida, Fuentes d'Onor, Cuidad Rodrigo; at the siege and capture of Badajos; at Salamanca, where I received a bad sabre wound in the side; at Madrid and Burgos, and the retreat from the latter. I was at Lamego and Visu, (but these were mere skrimmages!) at Vittoria, St. Sebastian—where I was shot through the thigh, and taken prisoner by a sortie while reconnoitring the horn-work and breach; —this was 21 July, 1813. Was retaken on the 31st August, when the place fell. I lay for some time in hospital at Santander and Bilboa; but I was young and strong, and my wound soon healed. I was fit for duty, and present at the sortie of Bayonne.

"In 1815 I embarked at Cork for the Netherlands with the 3d Battalion of the Royals. Recollect well the towns of Ostend, Bruges, Ghent, and Brussels. Was employed at this time in the regimental mess. Was quartered close to the house where the Duchess of Richmond gave the grand ball on the 17th of June.

I was married then, and both myself and my wife were employed in the officers' mess. I was on the field of Waterloo, and was sent, with the quarter-master of the battalion, back to Brussels after the battle, and thence to Clichi. In 1816 I was stationed at Valenciennes with the Army of Occupation; and in the same year I got my discharge. I set up for myself, and at one time had 500*l.* or 600*l.* in the Bank. In the year —— I came out to New South Wales; and in this country I have met with adventures, successes, and troubles such as few men have gone through."

The retired veteran was proceeding to recount some of the leading incidents of his Australian career, when his present historian interrupted him with the pertinent, but perhaps indelicate remark—"But, John, you have not told us how or why you emigrated."

"No, Sir, I have not," replied my hero, with a slight change of countenance. "Well, Sir, I endorsed a bill for a person who signed another man's name; was tried for being an accomplice in a forgery—(forgery itself was, you know, a hanging matter in those days)—and was transported. I don't complain of my judges. They behaved very well to me. They could not know that I was innocent of any wrong intention when I signed my name. The authorities in this country, too, behaved very well to me. I was always a sober man, you see. They assigned me as servant to Mr. H——, of G——, whom I served for four years as cook and house-steward. Having made some money, I afterwards set up an eating-house at Sydney, and did well in that line. However, getting tired of it, I pur-

chased a vessel of 95 tons lying in the Hawkesbury; stored it well in Sydney, and traded to Hobart Town, where at one time I had a house. I also made several trips to Swan River when it was first settled, carrying sundries there which I sold at high profits—especially wooden frame houses. Unfortunately I entrusted my vessel and cargo to a hired master, who got drunk with his crew and totally wrecked the schooner on the rocks of the Five Islands. Vessel and freight were worth, I suppose, 3,000*l*.

"Being now entirely ruined, I accepted the post of supercargo in a vessel trading to New Zealand; and whilst in that country I lost the use of my limbs from rheumatism. Returning to New South Wales, having once more saved a little money, I rented a farm on the Kurrajong Hills, but the main road from Sydney to Bathurst was diverted from it by the Government; the caterpillars devoured my crops, and I was compelled to give up the lease. After that I took to house-service again, which I find the safest and surest employment in my old age. I am now nearly worn out, and shall try no more experiments."

I have elsewhere remarked—or shall remark—that present good behaviour, independent of former character and conduct, is all that is required of a servant—(I had almost said of an *employé* of any sort)—in New South Wales. John, when I first made his acquaintance, was cook, waiter, and indeed ostensible manager of an excellent inn; for the host and hostess were of that easy-going and invisible order which is remarkable, although luckily not universal, among the hotel-keepers of this

country. When I left the colony, I ascertained that the old man had quitted the public line, and had become major-domo and factotum to an opulent squatter. The narrative is as he gave it to me.

Subsequently, accident enabled me to fill up one or two of the many *hiatus* which self-esteem naturally inclined this much-by-fortune-buffeted Shetlander to leave in his autobiography. In a casual conversation with one of the judges of the land I was made cognisant of John's second entrance into the bonds of matrimony, as well as other bonds. It appears he wooed and wedded one of his own feather, who shortly afterwards was convicted in the colony of being principally, while the husband was proved to be secondarily, engaged in a grand robbery of ardent spirits. What became of his better half I did not inquire, but my respectable old friend paid a compulsory visit to the two sequestered islands of Cockatoo and Norfolk. His Honour who pronounced the sentence was nevertheless so much impressed with the many valuable qualities of the exile, that, after seven years of probation, he procured his return to New South Wales. Even in Norfolk Island itself his talents did not remain under a bushel; for the officers of the detachment found out his cooking qualifications, and John was once more engaged at a military mess.

The above is a long story—here is a short one, on the subject of convict servants, just as it was related to me by a friend holding an exalted office in one of the Australian colonies. Pleased with the conduct and capabilities of a foreigner whom he had employed for some time as his head-servant, the gentleman, departing

from the ordinary custom in such cases, demanded privately of this meritorious domestic what might have been the cause of his being "sent out." "Somting about a vatch," was the prompt, frank, yet diplomatic, and therefore valet-like reply.

December 5*th*. Brucedale.—A riding and driving expedition. When the party about to be thus employed promises to be a numerous one, the following are something like the preliminary operations at the residence of an Australian provincial gentleman.

Host.—"How many horses have you got with you?"

Visitor.—"We have three for the saddle, and six carriage horses."

Host.—"Oh! then we shall want three more riding horses and four for the carriages. Your carriage horses will be all the better for a 'spell,' (a rest.) Here, Larry, take Fishhook with you, and drive in eight or ten horses. And, John, step up to the store-room,* and bring down two new saddles and a couple of bridles and martingales;—and, John, two or three whips. And, oh, John, you must get up twenty or thirty of the best colts for his Excellency to see this afternoon. He will see the heifers too; so let Paddy and Johnny Russell (a black) drive them down to the lagoon by five o'clock;—and halloo! you, Bill Ugly Mug! (another black), run down and open the slip-rail into the 1,000-acre paddock!"

Then comes a galloping of wild steeds with a cracking of stock-whips, and, after sundry wily evolutions of the

* The proprietor's private store, which contains everything, from a plough to a tin-tack.

drivers, the requisite number and perhaps a dozen or two more are collected within the stock-yard. They are soon haltered, saddled, and bridled, by fair means or foul; for the Australian horses are generally good-tempered, and besides no option is allowed them.

The chestnut is a capital hack but a little stale in the fore-legs, for he is a favourite stock-horse and has passed the greater part of his life at full gallop over ground as hard as the floor of a racket court. Moreover he happens to have only one shoe on, and that a hind one;—mere trifle! The "Emigrant" Filly has a sore back and mouth from the breaking—bagatelle! she will be all right after the first half-hour The "Agitator" colt will buck-jump a bit at starting;—"Oh! put Willy on him—he'll soon take the devil out of him!" . . .

The weather was beautiful, and we enjoyed a delightful excursion across the plains past Alloway Banks, a pretty cottage residence belonging to the Suttor family, and into the town of Bathurst, where we visited the barracks of the infantry detachment and of the mounted police, the Government cottage now the quarters of the officer commanding the troops, and other public buildings.

The subsequent reduction of the force in New South Wales has deprived Bathurst of the advantages social and financial of a military garrison. Bathurst must have been an excellent and agreeable station for an officer who knew how to maintain his position, to select his society, and who had some few more elevated resources than smoking and drinking brandy and water.

Unfortunately, at stations so distant from head quarters, a solitary subaltern too often falls into bad

hands. If he chance to be young and pliant, his barrack-room soon becomes the *estaminet* of all the idlers and ne'er-do-wells of the neighbourhood! If such happened sometimes at Bathurst, it is not the only place in Australia, nor in other colonies, where the like occurs.

I purchased at this town a pound of gunpowder and a pair of kid gloves—paying 10*s*. 6*d*. for the lot—expensive certainly, but not exorbitant perhaps, when the cost and risk of importation is taken into account. I wonder whether the well-dressed ladies who graced the ball at Brucedale last night, provided themselves at proportionate prices with all the white satin shoes, gloves, silks, muslins, blondes, tulles, ribbons and flowers which are necessary to the composition of what the newspapers style "an elegantly attired female!" If so, there must be a good deal of boiling-down to maintain the pin-money!

December 7th.—G. F. and myself, with a small Aboriginal boy as guide, repaired this afternoon to seek for snipe in a swampy valley not far off, and, for New South Wales, had a very good two hours' sport. My bag contained seven couple of those birds, a wild duck, and four brace of quail. One of the pleasantest passages of the sport was to count the teeth of the black lad, as he grinningly picked up a pair of widgeons which my companion and I respectively and simultaneously brought down on his head, as they skimmed over the tops of a clump of gum-trees.

The floods were very much out—so were the sun and the mosquitos. I don't know that I was ever, in a short

time, so burnt, bitten, and wet through at once. The snipe of Australia appears to me to be a finer bird than him of Europe, to the eye;—not so to the palate.

December 8th.—Quitted Brucedale, and set forth on our return to Sydney—our own horses having been sent on twelve miles to the hostelry of the widow Jones on the high road, and Mr. Suttor obligingly supplying us with teams for one stage. It was on this occasion that, as previously related, an accident to my ill-starred vehicle drew out the bush resources of Mr. Suttor in the manner described. It was truly a disreputable looking carriage when I turned it over—for the last time, fortunately! to Mr. Martyn, coach-builder, Sydney.

Widow Jones' is a comfortable road-side inn, beautifully situated at a place called Green Swamp, just where the Blue Mountains trend gently down into the Plains of Bathurst.

A few miles beyond Diamond Swamp we cheated the Surveyor-general and turned his flank, at least in so far as he is identified with the awful passage over Mount Lambey, by taking the line of Piper's Flat, a fine alluvial oasis in the midst of hills, covered with rich grass and watered by a beautiful stream, on the banks of which the well-fed cattle seemed almost to stagger under their fat.

The projector of the concurrent mountain road, for which he has been so much abused by travellers, would have smiled sarcastically could he have looked down from his pet mountain upon our weary cavalcade, toiling like tortoises through the deep, black, flooded soil of the valley below. Had it not been for the change of scenery,

I almost wished myself and carriage upon the steep and precipitous, but at least firm high road of Mount Lambey, by which route we performed our upward journey.

It was late in the evening before we reached Wallĕrawong, the residence of Mr. Walker, the intention being to go on to Binning's to sleep. The Governor and Lady Mary, and others of the party, accepted the invitation of the proprietor to remain for the night at Wallĕrawong, while Mr. Fitz Roy, myself, and the officer of mounted police, guided by Black George, a native scout of that force, made a moonlight ride of eight miles to the hotel above mentioned, of comfortable memory. The next day the vice-regal party performed a forced march over the road already travelled on our ascent of the mountains. We threaded the splendid pass of Mount Victoria, halted for refreshment at Blackheath, and slept at the Blue Mountain Inn.

December 10*th*. — A journey of twenty-one miles along the route already described, brought us to Bungarabee, the H. E. I. Company's stud establishment (just on the eve of abolition), where Captain Apperley gave us a warm reception and excellent entertainment—albeit his old butler *did* select this particular evening to get most uncommonly and inconveniently drunk. His grey hairs, I think, alone saved him from what his master calls, and sometimes inflicts, "a deuced good hiding."

Bungarabee consists of an excellent dwelling-house and offices, stables permanent and temporary for several hundred horses, with some fine open paddocks around them. It is about twenty-three miles from Sydney.

December 11*th.*—To-day we passed a spot where a year or two ago, in a thicket not far removed from the public road, was found a human skeleton with a military cloak and cap lying near it. On the peak of the latter, scratched with a penknife, were the words—" J.—H. Major, died of starvation, May the —, 184 —." I was told that the cause of this fearful incident was simply that the poor old ruined officer could not dig, was ashamed to beg—so he died, after writing his own mournful epitaph.

As for our party, we reached the capital safe and sound at five P. M., after a most agreeable four of thirty-three days, all in excellent and improved health.

"Travelling," says Ford in his amusing "Gatherings," "makes a man forget that he has a liver, that store-house of mortal misery, bile, blue pill, and blue devils."

I believe that no one of our party rejoiced at the change from the road to the city—from the picturesque and pastoral scenes of the Bush to the "Fumum et opes, strepitumque *Sydnæ*."

CHAPTER XII.

THE SYDNEY GAY SEASON — SOCIETY — GENERAL COMPETENCE — THE MARRIAGE MARKET—SETTLERS, SOLDIERS, AND SAILORS VIEWED MATRIMONIALLY—THE FITZ ROY HOUNDS—THE TURF AND THE RING—PIGEON AND PARROT MATCHES—SHARKS AND A SHARK HUNT—LA PEROUSE—PLAGUES OF NEW SOUTH WALES—DOMESTIC SERVANTS—MOSQUITOS—OLD NEWS—MENDICANCY—BEZONIANS—MIGRATION TO CALIFORNIA—"THE SYDNEY RANGERS."

WINTER is the gay season at Sydney. During the hotter months—November, December, January, February, and March, the society very wisely withdraws within its shell, shutting itself in, and the sun and hot winds out, "until further orders" as we say in the army. No one moves abroad during the day-time for mere pleasure: but towards four or five o'clock in the afternoon, those who wish for air and exercise, get into their carriages or on their horses; and if there be a breeze in the air it may be met with on the road to the Heads, blowing over the vast Pacific. Though not always cool, it is at least always pure and fresh.

Of the surface peculiarities of the Sydney society, I shall say but little. There is a feature of deeper

importance to which I am pleased to be able to bear testimony. I have visited no part of the world where there appears to exist so much of universal competence, so much equality of means, if such were possible. There must be very few individuals in New South Wales spending 1,000*l.* a-year upon the ordinary appliances of living; there must be equally few who cannot afford a sufficiency of good clothing, bread and meat and firing for themselves and families every day of the year. The barometer of domestic finance has but few degrees on its scale. No one in health can be at the zero of indigence, and scarcely any will burn like Dives, for the same cause.

In spite of the occasional grumblings of discontent on the subjects of the "exhausted resources," the "paralysed energies," the "universal insolvency," and the "downfall of the colony!"—there exists, in New South Wales, an amount of comfort and happiness for which its people ought to be deeply thankful. If there be, however, a general sufficiency of means for subsistence, there is not enough for display; nor, after the lesson which was taught by the general break down of 1841, is there much danger of the good folks suffering a relapse of that malady—so long, at least, as the impression of its ravages is visible as a warning.

The shopocracy of Sydney are a very thriving class, many of them keeping carriages and riding horses, possessing handsome villas and gardens in the suburbs, and even landed property in the provinces. I have heard the society of Sydney accused—I have

heard them accuse themselves, of an addiction to scandal and tittle-tattle; and I dare say, many persons who know the city quite as well as myself, will disagree with me when I exonerate the good people in general from those vices, or at least from possessing it in an inordinate degree. In New South Wales there is no aristocracy, properly so called, no hereditary idlers, no pensioned dowagers, no half-pay loungers, few widows or unmarried elders of either sex;—all are working people, from the Governor downwards. There is, therefore, I think, less backbiting and gossiping, less amiable uneasiness about other persons' affairs, than are generally to be found at an English watering place or country town. Except at the very earliest stage of my acquaintance with Sydney, its social atmosphere appeared to me singularly calm and placid. On that one occasion, indeed, it was convulsed in all its elements—from the representative of majesty to the printer's devils of the press—by a sudden and determined attempt to cause to be erased from the list of the 11, or 12,00 occasional visitors at Government-house the names of two or three persons far advanced in years and much esteemed by those who knew them, who in the somewhat lax infancy of the colony had, it was said, taken on themselves parental responsibilities without due regard to ritual; but who had long since submitted to its yoke, and had reared for their adopted country one and two generations of excellent and estimable citizens. Truly, at this juncture, such was the social uproar, such the disunion, ill-blood, and recrimination, that, at first, I feared that in venturing to Sydney I had stumbled

into some hot-bed of active and fearful dissipation! Whether, as a bachelor, I was disappointed or relieved on finding out my mistake, is of no consequence. At any rate I was as much amused as it was possible to be with a circumstance involving as much cruelty as absurdity; and I could not but congratulate the community upon the fact, that, in order to find a flaw in its immaculateness, it had been necessary to rake up again to the surface frailties that had been forgotten, and had, as it were, become fossilized by the lapse of ages! As far as I know, this was the only serious crusade against character that occurred in my time. I repeat, therefore, my opinion, that the society of Sydney is not censorious.

In the cool weather this society meets together very pleasantly at dinner parties of ten to fourteen, and at *soirées dansantes* of one hundred to three hundred persons. The really splendid rooms of Government-house, during the same season, receive a vast number of guests at dinners of twenty to thirty persons, and at balls at which are assembled from two hundred to twelve hundred persons, the latter number being, I think, something under that of the cards of invitation issued on her Majesty's birthday.

The lamentable death of Lady Mary Fitz Roy was in this point, as in every other, an irreparable misfortune to the colony. Her high rank and intimate relations with the most refined circles of the Old Country gave her advantages, as the leader of society, such as none of her predecessors, however estimable their qualities, had possessed. Gentle, kind, charitable, affable, accessible, and

gifted with a quiet dignity, which must be innate and can neither be acquired nor assumed, her influence—had she been spared—could not have failed to blend and reconcile the crude and discordant elements of a young and growing community. The sudden loss of this much-esteemed lady, aggravated as it was by the deplorable accident that caused it, not only made Government-house—in all colonies the great centre of society—a house of mourning for a lengthened period; but was, and has ever since continued to be, felt as a grievous public bereavement and misfortune.

In spite of the worthy Colonial Secretary's statistics, which tend to prove the still existing undue numerical proportion of males over females in the colony generally, the fair sex preponderates very largely in the ball-rooms of Sydney. The brothers and sons of those pretty girls and respectable matrons are, one must suppose, pushing their fortunes in the Bush or elsewhere; and, were it not for the officers of the staff and garrison, and now and then a lucky influx of naval men, the young ladies might live unpaired—even for the fugitive engagement of a quadrille or valtz.

Viewed as a marriage market New South Wales must at present be set down as decidedly and shockingly bad. A speculative young woman emigrating, without capital, in the hope of securing an establishment for life, will no more succeed than would the young man without funds make a livelihood by coming out as a squatter. In former days, indeed, when times were good and wool remunerative, the prosperous settler, tired of solitude, and desiring with Paul Richter "to find a gentle girl

who could cook something for him, and who would sometimes smile and sometimes weep with him,"—

"A creature not too bright and good
For human nature's daily food:"

desirous, in a word, of assistance and sympathy in the loneliness of the bush—repaired to the metropolis in deliberate and determined quest of the article desiderated. But the reverses of the colony made men cautious, and unluckily for the ladies they still continue so. Sentimental impulse seems to have utterly stagnated! Perhaps many of the fair damsels have souls above damper and bark huts. Perhaps some of them really prefer celibacy. Be this as it may, I see numbers of nice girls still performing the very natural and graceful duties of daughters, without any apparent prospect of engaging in woman's main mission. Perhaps, as I said before, they prefer celibacy. But, admitting the possibility of there being one or two dear little creatures who do *not* prefer that state, it is painful to me, who have a soft heart (I write as a married man!) to see the vine, the honeysuckle, the passion-flower, stretching out their delicate tendrils, and finding, alas! no responsive oak or elm to lend its firm and permanent support! Strange to say, too, the well brought up and pretty maidens of the middle and servant classes of Sydney do not appear to be much sought in marriage. Yet it is undoubtedly in these classes that the well-known preponderance of males exists. The single men do not want wives, and the responsibilities and encumbrances of family life. They prefer working hard—working like slaves—four or five days, and "larking" the rest of the week.

One day, in conversation with an old Qui Hi, I was contrasting New South Wales with India as a field of speculation in the above line for the more educated orders; when I was surprised to hear that things have altered since my time. Since the adoption of the overland route between England and Hindostan, would-be Benedicts go home by steam, and bring back to the east Hyperborean brides, with the rose of England fresh on their cheeks, instead of supplying themselves, as formerly, on the spot.

It results from the circumstances I have above noticed, that in Australia, as in other dependencies of the Crown, the members of the martial professions are more graciously regarded in the light of possible husbands and sons-in-law, than they are known to be in the Old Country. There is a vulgar old-fashioned notion among all classes at home—for which some of the ancient novel and play-writers may be thanked—that, if the private soldier be notoriously a "rascal in red," the officer must be a dicer, a drinker, and a ruffler—capable of jilting a woman and bilking a turnpike—a perpetrator of "broken oaths, and hearts, and heads," and of every intermediate enormity between chuck-farthing and manslaughter;—or, what is worse, a pauper! Who has not seen the cautious husband or father watching with distrust the epauletted attentions of the most innoxious child of Mars, wholly unsuspicious of the spruce young fellow in the black coat and white cravat who, two to one, is the real snake in the grass of the domestic lawn? Thus the mouse, in a good old fable, fled in terror from the cock, strutting and crowing about the farm-

yard, but looked without fear on the sleek tom-cat, whose gentle purring manners disarmed suspicion. Luckily we have the softer and more influential sex on our side;—although occasionally "a malignant and a turbaned" *chaperon*, having a pretty and wealthy daughter or ward, *will* turn against us and "traduce the state" of our morals, finances, and intentions. The "scorpion" in England becomes in the colonies an "eligible!"

As the close application to business, rendered necessary by the badness of the times, has operated as a deterrent from matrimony among the colonial gentlemen; perhaps it is the great amount of leisure enjoyed, or rather forced, upon individuals of my profession in this country, that has given the combined forces of Cupid and Hymen such an advantage over them. The shafts which glance harmless off the rhinoceros hide of the money-hunting merchant and the wool-gathering squatter, have transfixed the unoccupied heart and secured the unemployed hand of many a son of the sword in New South Wales and the neighbouring colonies—to a greater degree perhaps than occurs in any other of the five and forty dependencies of Great Britain. It was here that that social prodigy, a married ensign, first broke upon my astonished sight! Alack-a-day!—'twas a fearful spectacle for a philanthropist or a prophet; but the parties most concerned were as happy as if there were no to-morrow;—and life is short,—so the consequences usually accruing from the condition of "nothing a day, and find himself," had no terrors for the head of this youthful establishment. May they never meet the

troubles that, in the panoply of trusting and loving hearts, they have not feared to brave!

The blue-jackets too have not come off scot-free. Not a few of these open-hearted fellows, rendered doubly susceptible by long deprivation of female society, have fallen in love, and into a proposal, with some fair Australian—some lily of the Pacific; and, since their mission into these seas by "their lordships" in Whitehall does not comprise a clause for the replenishment of the population, and the inexorable rules of the service forbid domestic felicity on board ship, the consummation of these tender engagements are necessarily deferred "*sine die*,"—to the injury of society at large by the withdrawal, total or partial, of the plighted fair one from the world; a practice which I hereby anathematize and hold up to public reprobation! If, on the other hand, in the plenitude of desperate attachment, the knot is tied at the Antipodes—can I forget that two of the fairest Australian brides that ever blushed beneath the nuptial veil, came to England in the same merchant ship with myself and family, having, one short week before, parted with their but lately plighted lords, and seen the frigate that carried them on the self-same voyage disappear between the heads of Port Jackson!

New South Wales is certainly not what is considered in the army "a good quarter," especially for the officers. It must be admitted, I suppose, that, taking them as a class, gentlemen of the sword are not deeply addicted to literary pursuits; that no great amount of midnight oil—in the poetical sense at least!—is consumed by them in their general avocations. In these colonies,

and especially in New South Wales, there is no shooting or hunting, usually so rife in countries without game laws; nor any other safety valves for exuberant vitality,—while all the less innocent pastimes common to large towns, and seaport towns in particular, extend their temptations to young men of leisure and spirit. I err in saying that there is *no* hunting. There was none near Sydney when I first arrived. Formerly some approaches were made to an imitation of the good old English sport of fox-hunting; for your Briton generally contrives, in obstinate resistance to climate and circumstances, to carry about with him the customs and pursuits of the Mother-land. The mere non-existence of the fox in this country—the play of Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out by particular desire!—presented no obstacle to the performance of fox-hunting by her Majesty's servants in New South Wales. As the jackal obligingly undertook at the shortest notice that character in Hindostan, so, in Australia, the dingo, or native dog,—(you may see a fine specimen in the London Zoological Gardens,)—was not permitted, through any diffidence on his part, however natural, to decline the performance of the part of fox to the best of his ability. And truly he is no bad substitute. The Cumberland Hunt was only a matter of history when I reached the colony. It was left for Mr. George Fitz Roy to establish a regular pack, well turned out, master and whippers in "pink and skins," fixtures advertised, and everything orthodox.

The country is as inimical to fox-hunting as can well be conceived; wide tracts of dense forest, salt creeks,

impracticable ravines, a hard, sandy, scent-repelling soil, and in the cleared and enclosed ground three and four railed fences of iron bark and other unmanageable timber, which might well appal the stoutest heart—if not break the toughest neck—that ever put a nag at a fence or tumbled over it. Now and then occurred such slight incongruities as the master, servants, and field coming home with only half-a-dozen hounds out of the twenty couple, and sometimes without a single card of the pack—during which absence of the proper authorities some uneasiness could not but be felt as to the nature of the prey fourteen or fifteen couple of hungry hounds might happen to pick up in their uncontrolled course. Not unfrequently indeed, when legitimate game was scarce and when the woody nature of the country favoured an outbreak, the mottled conspirators would "run into" some stray sheep-dog before they could be whipped off; or, on the way home, would "walk into" some old lady's fat lap-dog—the latter a species of "riot," which, while outwardly condemning it, gave me, I confess, unmitigated satisfaction. The destruction of noxious animals was, as every one knows, the original motive of the chase. I am old enough to remember the pug-dog, the very type of useless cur-ism. He is now—with his black snout and curly tail—as extinct as the mastodon and the golden pippin. I wish all drawing-room rug-dogs a like fate!

To get a good run with a real wild dingo, it is necessary to rise with the lark as our ancestors did—"dull sleep and our downy beds scorning,"—and while the dew is still on the ground to try to cross the trail of

the robber of hen-roosts and reveller in the garbage of boiling-down stations. Later in the day he is laid up in some rocky bank; and the sun quickly dispels the scent so strong while the turf is yet damp. I beg to insert a short account of a run with this pack, which I joined in and reported to a newspaper.

"SPORTING INTELLIGENCE.—Mr. Fitz Roy's hounds had a brilliant run on Saturday last, the 5th of June. The fixture was Vineyard, the seat of H. Macarthur, Esq.; the hour five A.M. On being thrown into covert, the hounds almost immediately unkenneled a fine dingo, which made off at a good pace along the north bank of the river towards Kissing Point. Owing to the dryness of the ground the scent was not very good, but after a slight check the pack hit it off again on the swampy land near the river, carrying it breast high through Mrs. Bowerman's grounds, and across alternate scrub and cleared land till they reached the cross road to Pennant Hill wharf. Here Renard, hard pressed, turned his head northward, and, skirting the road, gave the field—most of whom had lost ground in the dense bush—an opportunity to retrieve lee way by racing up this woodland lane. Close at his brush the pack pushed him across the Paramatta-road and through a long rough dingle, without giving him a moment's breathing time, into a large grass paddock of forty or fifty acres, thinly dotted with acacia bushes, the horsemen charging several stiffish flights of rails crossing the country at right angles with the dingle; until dingo, hounds, and field together, reached the paddock above mentioned, in the middle of which the pack fairly coursed up to

him and pulled him down, not a single hound having lost his place. A party of farming people who were working in a field hard by, hearing the whoo-whoop! joined in the ceremony of breaking up, and appeared highly delighted at this realization in Australia of the good old field sports of the Mother-country.

"This capital run occupied twenty-six minutes; the pace in the low grounds was very fast, and the fences were of a less impracticable nature than is usual in this country. At one point a field of British fox-hunters found themselves in the somewhat uncommon predicament of thrusting through a dense scrub of burnt wattle-bushes, about the height of hop-poles, to the great disfigurement of white leathers; and at another charging, at full cry, over hedges of lemon and through alleys of orange-trees, laden with fruit.

"As the worthy master trotted home through Paramatta with a white tagged brush peeping out of his pocket, the dingo's head hanging from the whipper-in's saddle, and the hounds following with blood-smeared muzzles, an old fellow, who looked like a retired earth-stopper from the old country, exclaimed, "Well, d—— me, but this looks like work!"

Mr. Fitz Roy's kennel is at the Governor's country place, Paramatta. But he brings the hounds to Sydney during the session of the Legislative Council in the winter months; and the sport is here conducted on the stag-hunting principle. In this case getting up by candle-light is not necessary. The certainty of a find is secured by means of the bag; and, if the dingo should have lost scent by domestication, which is often the case

if long confined, a *soupçon* of aniseed supplies the want. If not added with moderation, so powerful is the odour of this drug that the riders themselves may almost carry the scent breast high.

The Botany Swamps are usually the locale of the fixtures. There are but few fences, but the country is covered with a short shrubby bush, in some places rising into thickets—not unlike the grouse-moors of North Britain—a similitude noticed by old Cook. As the pace is generally good, the necessary amount of excitement is procured, in the absence of fences, by rushing blindly through the brush, or clearing it at a bound. I have seen some really tolerable tumbles and divorcements of horse and rider on these occasions. The worst accident that can happen is getting bogged. Sometimes in hunting before sunrise a kangaroo is found, and, if not near a gully, affords a fast burst.

Among these same sand-hills and swamps there was, in 1848, a course constructed for hurdle-racing, which was attended by immense crowds of people of all classes from the city. I hardly know why this sport was discontinued, unless it was that some terrible falls were occasioned by the stiffness of the fences and the reckless riding of the gentlemen jockies, most of whom were officers of the garrison. The honest dwellers on the swamps, too, invariably made fire-wood of the hurdles.

I have little to say about the turf of New South Wales. I have occasionally seen very good running on the Homebush course, which is situated between Sydney and Paramatta, and is well attended by all classes, from

the Governor of the colony down to the real lord of the soil—the Aboriginal black.

The dullest feature in the Australian racing is the fact of one or two well-known horses carrying off all the prizes. I was sick and tired of hearing the "ould horse, Jorrocks," cheered by his numerous and uproarious friends as he came in "a winner," I do not know how many seasons in succession. The worst feature is the dishonest and scampish characters of the jockies.

The same may be said of Australian pugilism. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. "There is a time for all things," says the ancient proverb; "There is a price for all things," says the modern Solomon—a proverb not always inapplicable to the turf and ring of the old, as well as of this new, country. The latter thoroughly British pastime is in very bad repute here, and I dare say deservedly so. The "beaks" and police hunt down the principals, seconds, and spectators. The guardians of the public peace and property will go any distance to break up the "stakes and ropes," and catch the "commissaries;" while Sydney is meanwhile sacked by a juvenile mob of rioters, and the sideboards of Wooloomooloo are swept by burglars. There are no "Corinthians" here; and, however far I may agree with "Bell's Life" that discouragement of the fistic art may introduce that un-English arbitrator of dispute—the knife, still I must consider it fortunate that pugilism in New South Wales has no aristocratic supporters. Amongst the "Pets" and "Chickens" of the modern English ring there are not to be found

many individuals of high moral, worth although some of them have attained eminence as public characters; nor of excruciatingly polished manners—although they can "polish off" a customer in "a brace of shakes"—to use their own language.

It is needless to hint that your Botany Bay "Slasher," or your Hobart Town "White Headed Bob"—considering the probable causes of their excursion to these colonies—are hardly likely to add lustre to the profession of the noble art; and the authorities seem fully to appreciate this fact. One reason, perhaps, for the little popularity of pugilism, even among the lowest orders of this purely English colony, may be that fistic encounters are here often fatal—so often as to lead to the supposition that the climate may have something to do with it.

In reference to this subject, I find a note in my diary of a talk I had one day with a blacksmith on the Paramatta-road, in whose forge I had taken shelter from a shower. On my remarking that the name and sign had been lately removed from a large roadside tavern opposite his shop, he told me that the licence had been taken from the landlord on account of a man having been killed in a boxing match on the premises. The worthy son of Vulcan favoured me with a really sensible lecture on the effects of climate and intemperance. "Drink is the ruin, body and soul, of the people of this country," said he. "With a pint of East Indy rum inside, and a burning sun like this outside, any little accident will finish a man. A clip on the head that at home would not do a chap a morsel of harm, would settle him here

outright. You might as well blow out his brains at once as give him a heavy back-handed fall."

This "harmonious blacksmith" was in excellent health himself, which he attributed to sobriety and good temper. The thermometer must have ranged at about 90° in the shade, and he was thundering away at his anvil with a twenty-pound hammer and within a yard or two of a tremendous furnace. He would not be pitied, however, insisting upon it that the forge heat kept out the heat of the climate. This is the right stuff to make a prosperous emigrant of. Strength of arm, cheerfulness of spirit, sobriety and good sense, must command success in this country—or any other where the trades are not overstocked. The converse ensures rapid ruin.

In the absence of game near Sydney, inveterate shooters engage sometimes in pigeon matches, but these birds being expensive here, and the real blue-rock seldom attainable, the purveyors for the trap occasionally substitute parrots, which at some seasons are easily caught in sufficient numbers. The English bird-fancier's feelings will be shocked when I tell him or her that I have seen fifty couple of these beautiful denizens of the bush—blue, red, green, and yellow—butchered at one shooting match. In all kinds of sport—*quoad* destruction of animal life—it is hard to say where cruelty begins and ends.

He must be a quick shot who can kill ten out of twelve parrots at twenty-one yards from the trap.

I have said elsewhere that fishing excursions down the harbour often take place. Those who engage in the

sport often return with a good basket of schnappers and flatheads—perhaps a rock-cod or two; and with every bit of skin burnt off their noses and chins. Moreover, if they fish in their shirts for coolness sake, they are not unlikely to have their shoulders and arms blistered by the sun. Shark-hunting was the only kind of fishing in New South Wales that I thought worthy the trouble. I propose to give a specimen of a day's sport in this line.

If there is one luxury greater than another in a hot climate, one exercise more healthy than another, it is bathing. Until late in the year 1849 it might be enjoyed to perfection at Sydney. There is a bathing cottage at Government-house, there is a large hulk moored and fitted as a public bathing-house in Wooloomooloo Bay, and every villa near the harbour possesses a like convenience. A shady bank of the Domain called the Fig-tree is the favourite bathing-place of the populace. Although large sharks had more than once been caught far up the harbour, no accident was ever heard of, and bathers swam about the coves without fear and with impunity. It was in November of that year, I think, that a dead whale was floated by some accident within Port Jackson, and was picked up and "tried out" by some speculating fishermen. A troop of sharks must have followed the dead fish, and, having disposed of his carcase, remained foraging near the shores round Sydney. One day a large Newfoundland dog, swimming for the amusement of his master near the Battery, was seized by a shark, and only regained the shore to die. The newspapers warned bathers; but no caution

was observed until, early in December, a poor man swimming near the Fig-tree was attacked by a huge shark so near the bathing-place that another person repeatedly struck the fish with a boat-hook, thereby forcing it to release its victim. The unfortunate man was so dreadfully torn that he bled to death a few minutes afterwards. Not many days later I saw a fool-hardy fellow swimming about in the very same place with a straw hat on his head and a cigar in his mouth!

Soon after the destruction of the man in the Wooloo-mooloo Bay some fishermen reported that, a part of the dead whale having been carried by the tide into Botany Bay, a detachment of sharks had followed it there. An expedition against these tigers of the deep was organized while the desire of vengeance was still vivid, and I accepted an invitation to join it. We were four amateurs, with an old experienced fisherman, and a stout youth his son. We met at the "Sir Joseph Banks Hotel," on the shore of the Bay, and proceeded at high tide to a spot usually frequented by sharks, and by other fish of different kinds, in a good staunch little boat furnished with sail and oars. There was plenty of tackle both for larger and smaller game; shark hooks, as big and strong as those on which butchers hang up a sheep or calf for flaying, with stout chain lines to resist their teeth, and a graduated scale of others suited to the capacity of jaw of schnapper, flathead, bream, &c., and adapted to their habits, whether of grovelling at the bottom like the latter fish, or hunting in mid-water for his food like the former.

We had an excellent day's sport, although my companions, who had made several similar excursions, were disappointed in our want of success in securing the largest sized sharks. This was the fault of the tackle, not of our luck. Besides the implements for securing our finny foes, there lay across the thwarts a small magazine of weapons for dispatching them when hooked —iron lances, with handles of stout ash, and long and strong iron gaffs or landing hooks.

Anchoring the boats in about thirty feet water, the first operation was the baiting of the spot—locally termed "burley-ing"—with burnt fish, and with the eggs of sharks when any have been caught. Lines were then thrown in as far as possible from the boat, the hooks for sharks being baited at first with pieces of star-fish, and afterwards, when some of these had been caught, with huge junks of shark's flesh. The latter seemed peculiarly tempting to the sharks themselves. The huge pot-hook to which it was attached, together with a yard or two of dog-chain, were swallowed as an accompaniment too trifling to mention—much less to damp appetite. When one of the sportsmen feels a tug at his line, and judges by its energy that he has a shark for his customer, all other lines are, if possible, hauled aboard, in order that there may be no confusion and ravelling. If the fish be strong, heavy, and active, no little care is requisite to save your tackle from breakage and your quarry from escape. He who has hooked the fish holds on—like grim Death on his victim—and if you watch his face you will see powerful indications of excitement, mental and muscular. His teeth are set,

his colour is heightened, the perspiration starts on his brow, something like an oath perhaps slips through his lips as the cord strained to the utmost cuts into the skin of his empurpled fingers. He invokes aid, and with his feet jammed against stretcher, thwart, or gunwale, gradually shortens his hold. Meanwhile the others seizing lance and gaff-hook, "stand by" to assist the overtasked line, as the monster, darting hither and thither in silvery lightnings beneath the translucent wave, is drawn nearer and nearer to the surface.

"My eyes, he's a whopper!" cries the excited young boatman.

"He's off!" shouts another, as the shark makes a desperate plunge under the boat, and the line, dragged through the hands of the holder, is again suddenly slackened.

"He's all right, never fear—belay your line a bit, Sir, and look here," remarks the old fisherman.

And sure enough there was the huge fish clearly visible, about ten feet under the keel of the boat, and from stem to stern about the same length as herself.

"Now, Sir, let's have him up." And the instant the line was *taut*, the shark shot upwards—his broad snou showing above the surface close to the boat.

Then comes a scene of activity and animation indeed. The fish executing a series of summersets and spinnings, gets the line into a hundred twists and "snarls," and if once he succeed in bringing it across his jaws above the chain links—adieu to both fish and tackle. But, in the midst of a shower bath splashed up by the broad tail of

the shark, both lance and gaff are hard at work. He is speared through and through — his giant struggles throwing waves of bloody water over the gunwales of the little boat. The gaffs are hooked through his tough skin or within his jaws—for he has no gills to lay hold on. A shower of blows from axe, stretcher, or tiller fall on his devoted head, and, if not considered too large, heavy, or dangerous, he is lugged manfully into the centre of the boat, and threshing right and left with his tail to the last, is soon dispatched. A smart blow a few inches above the snout is more instantly fatal than the deepest stab.

The "school-shark" is dealt with as above. But if the "grey nurse," or old solitary shark be hooked, the cable is cut or the grapnel hauled on board, and he is allowed to tow the boat as he darts away with the line. The tables, however, are soon turned upon him; and after being *played*, as this cruel operation in fishing is blandly styled, for awhile until some portion of his vast strength is exhausted, the line is drawn over a roller in the stern of the boat, the oars are set to work, and, towed instead of towing, the shark is drawn into some shallow cove near the shore, where his bodily powers avail him less than in deep water; and after a fierce resistance and some little risk to his assailants; he falls a victim to their attacks.

Man has an innate horror of a shark, as he has of a snake; and he, who has frequented tropical climates, felt the absolute necessity of bathing, had his diurnal plunge embittered by the haunting idea of the vicinity of one of these sea pests, and occasionally been harrowed

by accidents arising from their voracity—feels this antipathy with double force.

There is, therefore, a species of delightful fury, a savage excitement experienced by the shark-hunter, that has no affinity with the philosophy of Old Isaac's gentle art. He revels in the animated indulgence of that cruelty which is inherent in the "child of wrath;" and the stings of conscience are blunted by the conviction that it is an act of justice, of retribution, of duty, he is engaged in, not one of wanton barbarity.

These were precisely my own sensations, when, drenched to the skin with showers of salt-water, scorched to blisters by the burning sun, excoriated as to my hands, covered with blood, and oil, and dirt, and breathless with exertion, I contemplated the corpse of my first shark. Tiger hunting is a more princely pastime. Boar hunting in Bengal Proper is the finest sport in the world. Fox hunting is an Englishman's birthright. The chase of the moose is excellent for young men strong enough to drag a pair of snow shoes five feet long upon their toes; and Mr. Gordon Cumming tells you how man may follow the bent of his organ of destructiveness on the gigantic beasts of South Africa.

Shark fishing is merely the best sport to be had in New South Wales; and affords a wholesome stimulation to the torpid action of life in Sydney. The humane or utilitarian reader will be glad to hear that the shark is not utterly useless after death. The professional fishermen extract a considerable quantity of excellent oil from the liver; and the fins, cut off, cured and packed, become an article of trade with China—whose people, for

reasons best known to themselves, delight in gelatinous food.

The most hideous to behold of the shark tribe is the wobegong, or woe-begone, as the fishermen call it. Tiger shark is another of the names of this fish. His broad back is spotted over with leopard-like marks; the belly is of a yellowish white. But to describe minutely so frightful a monster would be a difficult and ungracious task. Fancy a bloated toad, elongated to the extent of six or seven feet, and weighing some twenty stone; then cut off his legs, and you have a flattering likeness of the wobegong—two of which we killed this day. A heavy sluggish fish, he lies in wait for his prey at the edge of some reef of rocks or bank of sea-weed; swallows the bait indolently; appears but little sensible to the titillation of the barbed hook in his jaws; and is lugged, hand over hand, to the slaughter without much trouble or resistance. Neither lance nor gaff will penetrate his tough hide, but a blow on the head with an axe proves instantly fatal.

The schnapper affords a long and strong pull at the line; and is considered by the colonists as one of their best table fish. We killed one to-day weighing 21 lbs. The flathead is half buried in the sand at the bottom, but bites freely; and is, in my mind, a much better fish than the former. Our fishing-basket of this day comprised nine sharks, four schnappers, and about forty flatheads.

Just opposite La Perouse's monument we saw a Black spearing the rock-cod and groper, which fish feed on the shell-fish torn from the rocks in stormy weather. The

figure of this man poised motionless on a pedestal of rock, with his spear ready to strike, the waves dashing up to his feet, was a subject for a bronze statue. This must have been the very spot where in April, 1770, two natives, armed with spears, opposed the landing of Cook and his party, "and seemed resolved," as he says, "to defend their coast to the uttermost, though they were but two and we were forty." The last of the Botany Bay tribe, old "Boatswain," who had long been permitted to establish his gunceah in the gardens of the Banks Hotel, died a short time before the fishing occasion I have described.

The monument of La Perouse stands on a cleared spot near the entrance of the bay. Fifty yards from the obelisk there is an old dead tree, on which still may be faintly traced some words of an epitaph in memory of one of the unfortunate French captain's fellow-travellers, which have since been transferred to a tombstone by its side. It runs thus :—

HIC JACET
LE RECEVEUR
EX F. F. MINORIBUS
GALLIÆ SACERDOS,
PHYSICUS IN CIRCUMNAVIGATIONE MUNDI,
DUCE D. DE LA PEROUSE,
OBIIT DIE 17 FEB.
ANNO 1788.

The view from the spot is very picturesque.

On the evening of my shark hunt I had the pleasure of seeing my twenty pound schnapper at the foot of a friend's dinner table, looking something like a fine English cod-fish. But, alas! crowning disgrace of the

colony!—wretched destitution in the earliest and worthiest of the sciences!—there is no one—in a word, there is not *a cook* in New South Wales,—never has been, I believe, since the great circumnavigator just mentioned. The cooks in this colony are no more cooks in the European and artistical acceptation of the term, than any one of my coats would have been a coat in the eyes of Brummel!

The word cook leads me to the subject of domestic servants in general. Of all the plagues of New South Wales, and indeed of all the Australian colonies, the household servants are the worst. There are few good and faithful—as few skilful. One reason of this is the blameworthy indifference to character and cause of discharge exhibited by the employing classes—a relic, this, of the old convict system. Another cause lies in the unsettled mind of the emigrant, and his trying half a dozen trades of which he knows nothing, before he is driven to accept service. Many old colonists do not scruple to say that they prefer convicts to free servants. "We have a greater hold upon them," says one. "There are but two classes—the found-out and the unfound-out," mutters a cynic. A servant, holding the most responsible place, discharged in disgrace at an hour's notice and without a character, is engaged the next day in a similar post, and you have the pleasure of seeing him installed as confidential butler behind the chair of the lady or gentleman who may be entertaining you at dinner. You recognise the *soupe à la jardinière*, the baked schnapper *farçi*, in the preparation of which and other dishes it had taken you six months to instruct your late cook—whom you had just discharged for repeated insolence and

dishonesty. But, as I have said before, a cook—in the solemn signification of the word—is in New South Wales a fabulous animal—fabulous as the Bunyip of the blacks. The men-cooks are mostly ship-cooks, or stewards, dealers in cocky-leaky, sea-pie, plum-dough, and other blue-water barbarisms. The she-cooks are—kitchen-maids at best. Few private dinner parties are given, or can be given in Sydney, without the attendance of a professional cook, as well as a public waiter or two.

This has a singular effect in the eyes of the traveller lately arrived from England; for in the general exercise of hospitality towards him he is led to believe that each well-found establishment has an uniform butler—white waistcoat and tie, frill, toppin, knock knees, Irish brogue, and all;—never suspecting that this functionary is one and indivisible—the same honest and civil, but glass-jingling and plate-rattling Mr. O'Coffee-Tay—price 7*s.* 6*d.* per evening—public and transferable property!

The Sydney domestic servants treat service like a round of visits, taking a sojourn of a week, a month, or a quarter, according to their own tastes, the social qualities of their fellow-servants, the good living of "the hall," and the gullibility and subserviency of the employer. They greatly prefer engaging by the week. Not uncommonly they maintain a kind of running correspondence with the heads of some neighbouring families, and after coquetting for terms, pass over to the best bidder. The gentleman may think himself lucky if he have not occasionally to "groom and valet" himself and his horses; as for the lady—to chronicle small beer is her lightest task, happy if she be not compelled, at intervals,

to try her fair hands at cooking, or spider-brushing. I have been myself the guest at a country house where the lady confessed that she had not only cooked the dinner, but had, with her own hands, carried the logs to the kitchen fire, while the good-man was busy sawing and splitting them in the yard. The cook had got sulky because she had been expected to do what the lady was thus compelled to do, and the man servant, her husband, had gone into the town to drink and fight, "because the fit was on him."

I think I must have had twenty or even thirty servants in one year, always giving the highest wages. I shall not readily forget the amusing results of an advertisement for a butler and valet, which I was recommended to insert in the Sydney "Morning Herald." There was no want of applicants: the first was a miserable old ruin of a man, scarcely four feet high, who indignantly repelled my well-intended hint, that I did not think him strong enough for the situation. The next was a gigantic negro. He had been "'teward," he said, on board three or four merchant vessels, and was tired of the sea. He looked like a descendant of Mendoza the pugilist, and had probably been transported for killing a man in a twelve-foot ring. A tall, thin, grey-haired man, of polished exterior, next tendered his services. He had been a solicitor in England; had met with reverses; was at present a tutor at a school; could clean plate, because once he had had a service of his own. Then came a handsome, dark-eyed *gaillard*, with long black curls hanging over the collar of his round jacket, who threw rapid glances over the furniture and trinkets of the drawing-room—not forgetting the

maidens as he passed the kitchen door—in a truly buccaneering style. He gave his name Juan da Silva, and resented any mention of references. At length we were suited. He was a highly respectable young immigrant just landed, who had served in an aristocratic family at home. "Jeames," being steady, attentive, and perfectly acquainted with his duties, we were charmed with our acquisition, and congratulated ourselves on something like permanence of service, when, lo! in less than a month he gave warning. He had made use of my house as an hotel until he could settle himself; and having at length decided in favour of the drapery line, he was in a few days duly installed behind a counter in George-street.

This mode of action had probably been suggested for his observance by some crafty adviser in England, and the idea is by no means bad. A gentleman's regular household is not a bad look-out post for the newly arrived, perhaps penniless, immigrant. He gets good pay, food, and lodging; he disguises his ambitious projects under a show of zeal for his master's service; no one suspects that he has a soul above crumb and coat brushing. On a sudden the mask is thrown off, and the tape and ribbon measurer elect stands confessed. He quits his temporary asylum, smiling inwardly at your simplicity in taking him in, and being taken in yourself; and you are once more on the *pavé* for a servant. In the case just mentioned, our old nurse warned us that "that young fellow ain't a-going to stay;" and I wondered the less at his want of taste when she told me that she had one son in the ironmongery line getting fifty-two

guineas a-year, and another, only twelve years old, receiving at some shop 20*l.* and his "diet."

The great pleasure of shop-boys, unenjoyed by domestic servants, consists in going at half price to the theatre, and smoking cigars *ad libitum.* My first coachman had learnt all the arcana of his trade by driving a muffin-baker's cart. My second was an old worn-out, long backed, bandy-legged, and gouty man, but an excellent whip, who "had druv the last four-oss coach between Lunnun and Huntingdon, for Muster Newman," and had been beat off the road by the railways. This was an immigrant at the expense of the Land Fund. He remained about a year, and then went off to California (thereby defrauding that same Fund) to dig gold, just three weeks before the gold was discovered in Australia. I may here state as a fact, that the only really steady, sober, active, and efficient coachman I had in the colony was an emancipated convict.

Another specimen of the well-selected immigrants paid for out of the territorial revenue, as an addition to the labour market, was a fine lady cook from London, last from the service of Sir ——, Bart. She had plenty of money and clothes, could not work without an assistant in the kitchen, had delicate health and appetite, preferred solitary titbits in the kitchen to dining in the servants' hall with the rest of the household; was glad to quit service and to set up a shop; failed, and before she had been two months in the colony had advertised to get a passage back again to England as lady's maid, or nurse to a lady returning home. This is not the strong handed, cheerful minded, butter churning, cheese

and child making, notable woman, fit for a free emigrant to a working colony—coming out at the colony's expense, for the colony's good!

I have seen something of the *helps* in the Western New World. The Southern is no better off in this essential article of housewifery, although the homes of Sydney certainly have a larger allowance of what we English associate with the name of domestic comfort, than those of the Atlantic cities.

I must not quit the subject of household servants without stating, that during the last year or so of our residence in New South Wales, we had a most excellent knot of servants, with whom we parted with real regret.

Talking of the domestic pests of the colony, I must reserve a place for the mosquitos; and ought to have placed them at the head of the list. Little need be said on the subject; the mosquito is known, I dare say, in every colony and dependency of Great Britain, from the Pillars of Hercules to the foot of the Hymalaias—from the swamps of Hudson's Bay to the boiling springs of New Zealand. In *five* quarters of the globe, (if such division can exist,) has this minute enemy stabbed at my personal peace. Let me drown him in my bitterest ink! Those lucky persons who are unacquainted with the mosquito, cannot appreciate the discomfort arising from so contemptible a cause. Reading and writing, riding and walking, eating and sleeping, by daylight and candlelight, indoors and out, during six months of the Australian year, you are hemmed in by an army of these insidious insects. Presume to wear shoes and silk-

stockings—a pleasant dress in sultry weather, and before dinner is over, your insteps and ankles are covered with burning wounds. A Stoic could hardly resist scratching, however undignified the act; a saint could hardly help swearing, however small the provocation!

But the fair lady is the mosquito's chief victim. Her ungloved hand, her unguarded shoulders, her velvet cheek, are the too tempting objects of the tiny epicures. The truculent proboscis stabs the lily skin, sheds the innocent blood; and, what is worse, plays the deuce with good looks. I believe I have said enough to enlist the sympathies of mankind in active warfare against this detestable insect. How curious its history! The eggs of the mosquito are laid on the surface of the water. The grub disengages itself, and passes through two innoxious stages of its life in this element. In the second stage the insect lies wrapped in a thin membrane. This soon bursts; the little water-demon draws itself out of its wrapper, stands for a few minutes on the surface, expanding its wings to dry in the sun—miniature likeness of Satan surveying the world he was about to ruin, and at length takes flight in search of adventures and to fulfil its mission—the art of tormenting carried into practice. As the weather grows colder, the sufferer has his revenge. Although the appetite of the mosquito is as voracious as in the summer of his existence, his movements are faint and languid, he becomes too weak to pierce the human skin, and is now seen recruiting his waning health by sipping at wine-glasses and tea-cups. The winter arrives, and the vampire that has lived so

long on the life-blood of others, ceases to exist. The reprieve to suffering humanity is, however, but short; returning spring brings back with returning vegetation the mosquito in all his glory, and in countless myriads of legions. It was truly as well as forcibly remarked by an English housemaid in my family, that the mosquitos appeared to be most "biteful" just before the cold weather kills them.

Amongst the plagues incidental to this colony I must not forget to anathematise the tardiness and uncertainty of epistolary correspondence. I could enumerate a hundred instances of results, inconvenient and perplexing, ludicrous, or truly lamentable, which have arisen, and do still arise, through the irregularity of the mails from Europe. This was more frequent and more palpable, perhaps, when the Government employed certain chosen vessels as post-office packets. These very frequently made the slowest passages in the year. The only vessels compelled under fine to sail from London on a day fixed, they were generally deeply laden, and easily beaten by lighter ships. The bulk of letters and newspapers came by the packets, but a considerable quantity came also by other vessels. When a vessel of later date arrived before that which sailed from England a fortnight or a month earlier, the consequences can be imagined.

For instance—to begin with political events. In the first days of October, I think, in 1848, the *Charlotte Jane*, emigrant ship, arrives at Sydney, bringing the news of a revolution in Paris having been accomplished;

a provisional Government formed; the Tuileries and Palais Royal sacked; the throne burnt; and the King of the French a refugee in England!

Unprepared by any revelation of previous events, the intelligence falls like a thunder-bolt on the quid-nuncs of Australia—upon those especially whose gains depend on the peace of Europe—and more than any one upon the French Consul at Sydney, who not only held his commission (worth some 1,200*l.* a-year) under the ex-king's hand, but had probably all his fortunes in the French funds!

Not until the 19th of the same month slopes in, at the rate of two knots an hour, the Post-office packet, *Achilles*, (not the swift-footed!) 133 days from the Downs, with all the public despatches, gazettes, &c., informing us that things were beginning to look somewhat democratical and republican in La belle France; that the Reform Banquet was to come off at Paris on Tuesday next; that the King intended to prohibit it, &c. There is something truly absurd in reading the sage prophecies of an old newspaper or letter which have been utterly falsified by the actual result of affairs received by a faster channel a month before!

I give a case in private life. Mrs. A——, of Sydney, receives intelligence from England that her younger sister has evident prospects of becoming a mother. And it is not until several days later that a letter of much earlier date announces the not irrelevant preliminary of that beloved relative's marriage. I record an instance closely affecting myself. I received three

letters from Miss ——, dated in London just eleven weeks after she had become my wife in Sydney.

Steam communication has long been talked of, and it is to be hoped that Her Majesty's Australasian dominions will not long suffer the disadvantage and disgrace of being the only portion of her realm beyond the reach of this great agent.

The Singapore route, which would seem to be the most favourable, will reduce the passage from London to Sydney to 62 days or thereabouts. In 1847 the nett revenue on letters conveyed between the London and Sydney Post-office was, as I am informed, 54,000*l.*, and the colony has voted 6,000*l.* a-year for three years in aid of the project. The cost of establishing steam mail packets between Sydney and Singapore will not exceed those sums. But the completion of the Egypt, India, and Singapore line will only be an instalment of the steam due to the great southern colonies; for it can be available only for the carriage of mails and of the few passengers who can afford the luxury of the trip—spending in a couple of months what would support them for six.

There must, and will be, ere long, steam communication for emigration and colonization purposes between England and Australasia, direct. Time and space must be, if not annihilated, so far modified as to diminish the difference of distance from England to America and to Australia respectively; for who can doubt that it is the tedious length and expense of passage that prevents the emigrant from pitching his

tent in a colony of his countrymen, rather than among a nation where he will lose his individuality as a Briton?

For the conveyance of emigrants of all classes and their effects, and for the transport of merchandise, the Cape line will probably be adopted. It must not be forgotten that our right of pathway through Egypt is but permissive; and that notices warning off trespassers on those valuable sand deserts may be posted up at any moment by the Moslem lord of the manor.

Up to the day of my departure from New South Wales, nothing definitive had been done, in the way of improved postal communication, to lighten the darkness of the colony. Whilst my brother at his London club formed one of the usual circle of quid-nuncs, ready to pounce upon and appropriate an evening paper before the waiter had time to dry the copy and place it on the table, and felt aggrieved and ill-used if the 4 o'clock issue was withheld from him for ten minutes—myself was compelled, on the 15th of July 1851, to be happy in the enjoyment of the "Times" or "Chronicle" of the ides of March. For three years the colonists have been sickening with hope deferred on this point, of such vital importance to their interests and happiness. Amongst the authorities at Home there has been a great deal of vapouring about it indeed, but no steam!

It is a pleasant feature of the Australian social status, that there are no beggars: indeed it is only in the older countries that mendicancy is not only a necessity but a trade. Sydney owes this happy exemption not a little to

her own charitable Institutions, supported equally by Government and voluntary contributions of the public. But the cheapness of the common necessaries of life is no doubt the chief cause. I am speaking of street begging alone—beggary which is done to perfection in France and Ireland only, and in which England is not very far behind—beggary which haunts the traveller, and the lounger, the man of business and the man of pleasure; famine, nakedness, disease and deformity dogging your steps, running by your side, and often extorting alms by exciting feelings rather of impatience and disgust than of humanity and sympathy.

No one but he who has returned to London or Dublin after a long residence in a thriving colony can appreciate the torment of mendicant solicitation, with a concomitant desire to give, poverty of means, and fear of imposture; nor can know the luxury of exemption therefrom.

Not that the givers of alms are saved money by this freedom from street beggary, however much their feelings may be spared; for every now and then comes an appeal that cannot well be resisted, and of a somewhat more expensive cast than the mere dole of coppers or sixpences. A decayed professional gentleman, with a folio full of testimonials to character; one who not many years ago spent his thousands a-year, and "had the honour of entertaining at my table many gentlemen of your cloth;" waits on you with his memorial. Another, having retired from a civil branch of the Military Service, on the faith that starvation was impos-

sible in a land of plenty, relates his melancholy tale, ending with the assurance that he passed the last two or three nights in the Domain under a tree, because he could not afford a lodging. He begs a *loan* of 5*l.*, and refuses indignantly the prudent offer of a free gift of smaller amount. Some lady of fashion in England coolly asks the minister or other patron of Emigration for a free passage to Australia, (which she understands is one of the West Indian Islands,) as well as for a recommendation to the Governor, in favour of "an excellent creature, an old governess of mine." Her style of singing is out of date at home; her voice is cracked, her French somewhat German, her health and nerves rickety. She arrives with two or three letters of introduction, five pounds in her pocket, and as many smart evening dresses—fully expecting that before that handsome sum is spent a situation of 2 or 300*l.* a-year will drop from the Australian skies into her lap. In a month or two the charitable public hears of her having been "sold up" by her landlady for board and lodging; some worthy clergyman puts his name and mite to her "Humbly sheweth;" and society supports her until she finds some employment very much less lucrative than her ill-founded hopes led her to aspire to. She had better have asked in London how many families in Australia can afford to give 50*l.* a-year to a governess.

Such is by no means a rare specimen of the persons unfairly thrown upon the charity of a poor community. In 1848 a young lad of good family, aged eighteen, with a mere schoolboy education—to which his father,

having sundry other children, could not afford to give a college finish, was deliberately sent out here with only 30*l.* wherewith to begin life — because this same wise parent had heard that everybody could "get on" in New South Wales! He presented a letter of introduction and his card with smiling confidence to a friend of mine occupying a high post in the colony; and was dumb-struck when he found that he had an excellent chance of starving.

I remember some years ago purchasing for 6*d.* at a book-stall in Covent Garden Piazza, a little work entituled "How to live well on 100*l.* a-year, and how to live like a gentleman on 150*l.* a-year." Some of the aimless emigrants I have met with here had better have stayed at home, and lived according to the statutes of that sixpenny code. Sydney was relieved of a good many "Bezonians" of a more impudent and pretentious order, at the first outbreak of the Californian mania in this colony. The hotel-keepers, tailors, and other tradesmen honoured with the custom of such persons, were the compulsory furnishers of alms on these occasions, for it is needless to say that their exodus from Port Jackson was not accompanied on their part by a "flourish of trumpets," however loud might have been the "alarums," when their absence was, too late, discovered. Whether they dug gold or their graves in California it little signified to the "sufferers;" for although the adventurers might be heard of, they were never seen again at Sydney.

At intervals the Sydney cits are dazzled by the bright but evanescent career of some "swell" from Europe.

He contrives one or two introductions, gets admission, as an Hon. Member, into the Australian Club; talks largely and knowingly of his English stud—the whole of it glittering probably in mosaic gold on his corazza front; dines once at Government-house, and disappears, leaving a scarlet hunting coat and leathers, with a few minor articles of attire, to defray his just debts. It is only after the total evaporation of such a visitant that sagacious persons begin to find out no one knew much about him; that his advent to New South Wales had never been well accounted for;—and, indeed, such a visit to such a country does require some explanation.

I remember that some time in 1849 I missed from his "pride of place," on the driving-box of a well turned out and beautifully driven tandem, a dashing looking personage, who from the tip of moustache to that of patent leather boot was the very perfection of *point de vice*. I may say I was sorry to miss him; for somehow or other, from my boyhood upwards—in common with many another of my species—the spectacle of a tandem artistically and boldly driven always caused a certain undefined degree of pleasurable excitement. Through the medium of the Sydney papers, not many months later, we received the intelligence that our showy friend had accepted the appointment of waiter at an hotel in San Francisco. This at first sight would appear a downhill stage in the journey of life; but as his employers in the gold-country doubtless came down with the "dust" pretty freely for his services, he is probably much better paid now than either he or his creditors ever were before. I could

enumerate sundry other special instances of rapid wane, but in mercy to my patient reader I forbear. I may mention, however, that some of the human meteors that shot from Australia to California about this time were heard of as helping, for hire, to unload merchant vessels at the mouth of the Sacramento.

The re-migration from New South Wales to California has—all things considered—been less extensive than might have been expected. Some alarm was created at first by the rush of an adventurous few; and towards the end of 1849 the legislative council proposed measures to prevent the re-emigration to that state or elsewhere of persons who had arrived in the colony as free or assisted immigrants at the expense of the Land Fund. But the first return ships brought such discouraging accounts, as fortunately deterred all those who had wisely resolved to keep their gold-hunting intentions in reserve until the personal experience of the advance guard had given them the cue.

Prices like the following were calculated to make many hesitate before leaving a country with the best meat at 2*d.* a pound—bread at the same price, and tea at 1*s.* Wholesale prices at San Francisco in 1849:—Tea, six dollars a pound, bread, 2*s.*, butter 6*s.*, fresh beef, 1*s.* 3*d.*, water, (the colour of milk,) 6*d.* a bucket; milk, (colour of water,) 6*s.* a pint—Ague fever and Lynch-law, gratis! A heavy tax was subsequently levied in the American State upon all foreign gold-diggers. Persons from Australia were received there with suspicion, and were the last in the labour-market to

obtain employment. The "Sydney Rangers" were a proscribed race in the Californian wooden cities. Such is the disadvantage of a bad name, that some of them met the dog's fate, and were hanged out of hand, without deserving it a jot more than the "free and enlightened" citizens who acted as their judge, jury and executioners in the one summary process of the law of the backwoods.

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